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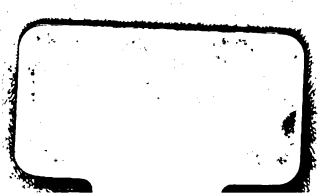

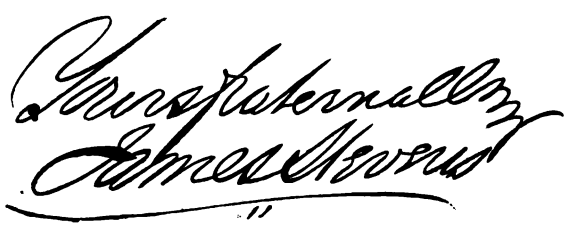

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CHIPS

FROM A

ROUGH ASHLAR

"Knocked off" by the

Gavel of Common Sense;

A DISCOURSE

ON

THE RITUAL & CEREMONIAL OF FREEMASONRY,

BY

W. BRO. JAMES STEVENS, P.M., P.Z.,

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Author of "Uniformity of Masonic Ritual and Observance," "Map of the Masonic Lodges in England and Wales," &c., &c.

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"TO 'MASONS AND 'MASONS ONLY."

Brethren,—

I offer no apology for the publication of this work. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse!* Its object will be ascertained by a perusal of the introductory chapter. If you cannot sympathise with that object cast the book aside, it will not interest you. Equally with those who have not seen the LIGHT, and who therefore could not understand its contents, for you there will be "nothing in it." If, on the contrary, you are zealous for the purity of Masonic Ritual you *may* find a few hints worthy of your attention.

Yours faithfully and fraternally,

JAMES STEVENS,

P.M., P.Z.

Clapham, March, 1885.

CHIPS FROM A ROUGH ASHLAR.

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Chips from a Rough Ashlar.

Introductory Chapter.

PRECEPTOR, PUBLISHER AND STUDENT.

Differences and divergencies in Masonic Ritual — Published Rituals as false guides—Lodges of Instruction—Importance of correct verbiage—The Rough Ashlar.

Pub.—

PERMIT me, my worthy Brother Preceptor, to introduce a friend who has taken the M.M. Degree in Freemasonry. He is desirous of making himself an earnest student in our liberal Art, and, as he has been informed is expected from him, to "extend his researches into the hidden mysteries of the Science."

Pre.—I greet your young friend heartily, and am complimented by your introduction. What ability to instruct I may possess, be it much or little, will be at his service, the more readily that my duty and obligation are "to afford assistance and instruction." But why select me for such a purpose?

Pub.—For no very especial reason, believing as I do that there are very many able and perfect Masters of our Art, ever ready to impart information, and to assist the

novitiate; but convenience of approach, and a knowledge that an experience of "working" extending over more than a quarter of a century, must have, to some extent, fitted you for Masonic Tuition, have been the principal inducements.

Pre.—You flatter me! A truce, however, to compliments between us; they are not needed. I extend the "grip" to our young Brother Student, and will cordially endeavour to enlighten his mind on those matters in respect of which he may seek information.

Stu.—Thanks, Brother Preceptor; for my part you may take assurance that you will find me attentive and desirous to profit by your teaching.

Pre.—Well said, my worthy Brother! I would have you first understand that I am not in perfect agreement with *all* the forms or language of the Ritual and Ceremonial as practised and spoken in all our Lodges. Differences and divergencies from what I consider to have been originally intended by our predecessors in the noble Art are numerous in certain quarters, and this variance is apt to confuse and disturb the mind of the anxious learner in the present day. In our "Articles of Union" dated 1813, it was expressed that—"There shall be the most perfect unity of obligation, of discipline, of working the Lodges, of making, passing, raising, instructing, and clothing Brothers, so that one pure unsullied system according to the genuine LANDMARKS, laws and traditions of the craft shall be maintained, upheld and practised throughout the 'Masonic World.'" At that time there must have been a form of Ritual which had been perfected and agreed upon to secure such perfect unity. Notwithstanding this, a well-known Masonic author, writing in 1867, says:—"The legends or traditions of Freemasonry constitute a very considerable and important part of its ritual. In many

instances these traditions have been corrupted by anachronisms and other errors, which have naturally crept into them during a long series of oral transmission."* Of my own experience since that date the corruption of the original text has greatly increased. Now, if you are to be a student of mine you must be prepared to bear with me when necessity requires that I should point out what these errors and anachronisms are, and to give my interpretations in reference thereto consideration if not acceptance. I shall have no right or power to control you in your decision, nor shall I ask for any departure from your ultimate conviction. But

"I shall speak with earnest mind
What is in me; self rewarded
If I aid, though unregarded,
The advancement of my kind!"

If, therefore, you think you can listen to me, and when our opinions differ will retain and act upon your own without condemning mine, we can proceed with the work which this introduction by my worthy Brother Publisher is intended to promote.

Pub.—Fairly put, Brother Preceptor, and I am sure our friend will so consider it. He can tell you, for he has so informed me, that even at this early stage of his Masonic career, the confusion and disturbance you speak of is within his experience. Already he has traced out the great diversity of expressions which he has found in the so-called "guides" to ritual, of which so many are now published; and, as he says, he seeks to reconcile the conflicting passages by obtaining what reasonable interpretation of some of them can be afforded, and of assuring himself "which is correct."

Pre.—The old story, where the learning of ritual by

* Mackey's Lexicon of Freemasonry.

books is concerned! It surprises me at this day to note the almost unbelief with which the statement that "twenty-five years ago many of my co-temporaries perfected their acquaintance with Masonic work through oral instruction only" is met. But it is a fact, and ritual thus learnt is not easily forgotten as in the other case; the several points are more completely considered before becoming impressed on the memory, and they do not so readily fade away in after years.

Pub.—Nevertheless these books you appear so to condemn must be useful.

Pre.—Pardon me; from your point of view probably so, but not from mine. They are far too annunciative; they inform *too much*. I agree with WARD,* who says, "The secrets of Masonry are her signs, words and tokens; these the oath regards and no more." But the published rituals do not observe the reservation which the Masonic obligation imposes, and therefore do great wrong to the Order. I have elsewhere said that "it is too late in the day to attempt to impose upon the neophytes of our Order that no insight whatever as to the mode of working our rites and ceremonies is obtainable through the medium of the Press;"† and to the extent of reasonable disquisition on all points except those which "the oath regards," can see no objection thereto; for I also agree with OLIVER that "it would be better to guide the enquirer into a right path, than, by endeavouring to suppress his desire for information, suffer him to stray into devious courses which may terminate in error and absurdity."‡ But nothing justifies the breach of a solemn engagement to "HELE,

* *Ward's* Freemasonry, page 142.

† "Uniformity of Masonic Working and Observance."—W. W. Morgan, London.

‡ *Oliver's* "Landmarks."

conceal, and never reveal," either by written mark or gravure, those esoteric words and actions in respect of which, more forcibly perhaps than of anything else, that excellent virtue of the Craft, SILENCE, ought most especially to be observed. In that respect, if in no other, they are to be condemned.

Pub.—I grant that unless you (unintentionally, of course,) exaggerate this exposure of what should be concealed, your condemnation is deserved. In other respects I presume you would not deny their utility to some extent.

Pre.—I remember that in a review of BRO. DR. COX'S reprints of the Old Constitutions, some years ago, the reviewer remarked on the subject of Masonic publications generally, "When it is said that one principle element of Freemasonry is and ever has been secrecy, it is evident that any books professing to teach the *rites and mysteries* of the craft are self-convicted impostures. Their Authors hold themselves out as either perjurers or liars. But it is very different with books which, if they tell somewhat, describe or convey instruction in a manner that is not understandable by any save those who possess the master key. They have enough in them to interest a large number of readers, even outside the circle which comprehends them fully."* Now, those remarks I echo thoroughly, and for such works as those last referred to have the greatest possible respect. In regard to those first spoken of, since it has come to pass that the *rites and mysteries* have been published, and that nothing can possibly conceal the fact that several of these "self-convicted impostures," under various forms of publication,

* "The Old Constitutions belonging to the Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, &c." by the *Rev. John Edmund Cox, D.D.. F.S.A., P.G. Chaplain*, 1871.

are obtainable by anyone who is not particular as to the means by which he obtains information, nor as to the absolute correctness of such information when obtained, I certainly would not deny some amount of usefulness to them if they were but in perfect agreement. But they are not so, and herein is to be found the evidence of the imposture practised on the unwary. No two agree, and consequently the younger members of our Order are frequently misled, and much is submitted for their learning and consideration which, for various reasons, they are quite unable to interpret and understand. Sometimes in one guise, sometimes in another, they are led from pillar to post, and what they learn and practise in one Lodge or locality, they find utterly tabooed in another. So-and-so's *system* over-rides some other one's *system*, and between them both the student generally becomes careless, and for the sake of peace gives way where he ought to have the courage of his own convictions and remain firm. He cannot even be a good "Book-Mason," if ever such a person did exist, for the contradictions these books contain are so numerous through their preparation by inexperts, and the carelessness of compilers, compositors and Press readers, that errors of all kinds are promulgated and perpetuated to the destruction of the original pure and simple, though grand composition of our earlier Masters of the Art.

Pub.—But without these books, how in the present day could our younger members gain any of the knowledge they seek, as well for their own advancement as, in many cases I believe, with a view to impart information to others?

Pre.—By doing as their predecessors did in days gone by; attending such Lodges of Instruction as are presided over by known experts whose interpretations of doubtful points agree with common sense and the results of expe-

rience. By listening attentively and carefully, and not too rapidly storing away the information they determine to retain, and when so stored by permitting no change of method or diction unless with most abundant reasons. And I would strongly counsel our younger Members to consider that greater weight should naturally attach to the tuition of those who have passed the Chair in some one or other of the Lodges, and have gained their experience during a long course of practice, than to those who, as a result of good memory and fluent speech, assume the position of Preceptor before they have served in the capacity of W.M. These latter are apt to repeat phrases without meaning and to perpetuate errors without consideration, pleading as an excuse that "so have they been taught," and having no self-reliance to contend against the want of knowledge of their respective tutors. So we frequently find a justification for the remark of an eminent Mason that our ritual has become in some places "full of outrageous blunders, grammatical and otherwise, which are reproduced with ludicrous fidelity every lodge night merely because they have been communicated by an illiterate Preceptor, or are printed in a book of supposed authority."

Pub.—I think your advice is good and shall hope that our young Brother will follow your recommendation. I admit with you the importance of correct verbiage, remembering a remark in HORNE TOOKE's *Diversions of Purley*, that "Mankind in general are not sufficiently aware that words without meaning, or of equivocal meaning, are the everlasting engines of fraud and injustice, and that the *Grimgibber** of Westminster Hall is a more fertile and a much more formidable source of imposture than the *Abracadabra* of magicians." He also goes on to state how the various constructions of these simple words, *On*,

* Grimgibber—Distortion of Words.

Concerning and *That* made him a victim in a Court of Law, and were "the abject instruments of his civil extinction." In relation to the same subject I have read that shortly before 1840 the meaning of the word *Upon*, as a preposition of time, occupied the attention of the whole of the Judges and Counsel of the Queen's Bench.

Stu.—If I may be excused for venturing to intrude on this conversation, I should like to refer to the observations of Dr. Peter Paul Roget whose Dictionary of Synomyns is a favourite Code of reference of mine, and who says in relation to the importance of language:—* "It is of the utmost consequence that strict accuracy should regulate our use of language, and that every one should acquire the power and the habit of expressing his thoughts with perspicuity and correctness. Few indeed can appreciate the real extent and importance of that influence which language has always exercised on human affairs, or can be aware how often these are determined by causes much slighter than are apparent to a superficial observer. False logic, disguised under spacious phraseology, too often gains the assent of the unthinking multitude, disseminating far and wide the seeds of prejudice and error. Truisms pass current, and wear the semblance of profound wisdom when dressed up in the tinsel garb of antithetical phrases or set off by an imposing pomp of paradox. By a confused jargon of involved and mystical sentences the imagination is easily enveigled into a transcendental region of clouds, and the understanding beguiled into the belief that it is acquiring knowledge and approaching truth. A misapplied or misapprehended term is sufficient to give rise to fierce and interminable disputes; a misnomer has turned the tide of popular opinion; a verbal sophism has decided a party question; an artful watchword, thrown among combustible materials, has

* *Roget's* Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases.

kindled the flames of deadly warfare and changed the destiny of an empire."

Pre.—I am glad you both think with me. But not only in respect of verbiage in Ritual will the work I am about to undertake in connection with our Brother Student be concerned, but also in regard to those portions of our Rites and Ceremonies which are either now imperfectly practised or not altogether understood, and which were originally intended as much to veil our mysteries as to inculcate lessons of morality. If I endeavour to teach, and he will listen to the conclusions arrived at by long and close study and opportunities for practice which I have enjoyed, we may be able to get as it were at the soul of Masonry, and restore in some measure what I believe *must have been* the original conceptions of former Masters of the Art now destroyed by mutilated versions and corrupted texts; to secure a better insight into their meaning, a greater respect for the ritual, and a purer and nobler atmosphere in which it may be presented.

Pub.—A good and worthy endeavour, in which I shall wish you both unqualified success. Brother Student, I leave you to the charge of our Brother Preceptor, hoping that what you have already heard from him may induce you to continue under his tuition. At present you may be considered perhaps as but a "ROUGH ASHLAR," your Masonic mind being as yet in its infant or primitive state, rude and unpolished. But I am sure from the attention you have given to what has passed at this introduction you will be as desirous to learn as our Bro. Preceptor is to teach, and with this assurance I commend you to each other.

Stu.—Thank you heartily, Brother Publisher, and I join with you in the hope that the introduction you have made may result in mutual benefit. You have my promise to

weigh well whatever may be communicated to me, and to act upon whatever may be based on perfect reasoning; of course, as a "free man of sound judgment," reserving my right to the exercise of my own convictions in all matters wherein I see fit to do so.

Pre.—A very proper reservation and one in which I entirely agree. I want no mere plastic clay to mould, but prefer the "rough and unhewn stone as taken from the quarry" whereon to exercise the Gavel of Common Sense, and from which to knock off Knobs and Excrescences. In other words "to form the rude and prove the perfect mass." Therefore, with your permission, we will arrange an early Meeting whereat I will commence the operation of taking

"CHIPS FROM A ROUGH ASHLAR."

Chip 1.

PRECEPTOR AND STUDENT.

Presumed institution of speculative Freemasonry—The Ritual of 1813 *— It's missing MSS. — Origin of "Emulation" and "Stability"* SYSTEMS *of working — Brother Henry Muggeridge—The "mixing" of the systems—Disputes met by concessions — The place of perfect calm.*

Pre.—

GOOD EVENING, Brother Student! Punctual to your appointment, as I hope you will continue to be, not only in respect of the meetings we may arrange for the purpose we have in view, but in all Masonic matters wherein you may be concerned. For without punctuality the business of Freemasonry is frequently retarded and in many instances conduces to hasty and slovenly performed "work" to the injury of all concerned. But I'll not begin our evening's work with a homily on that subject, as I dare say occasion will arise for more direct reference to its value and necessity. So pray be seated, and first inform me have you yet received any Masonic instruction beyond that which has been communicated through the ceremonies in which you have necessarily taken part?

Stu.—As our Brother Publisher stated when introducing me I have compared certain books purporting to teach the Ceremonies of the Order, one with another, but finding the

divergencies you then spoke of, could place no reliance on either of them. So I refrained from committing any portion of what I read to my memory and, acting on advice, shall prefer to learn in the manner you have proposed to me.

Pre.—Very good! I will not ask your reasons for becoming a Freemason, not doubting that they were such as are proper and honourable; but I would like to know in what light you considered the Order before deciding on becoming one of its Members?

Stu.—I was told that it was an Institution of considerable antiquity, and an organization which in the present state of Society it was alike honourable and useful to be connected with. More than that I did not then seek to know.

Pre.—And now?

Stu.—Now I see that there is in its secret work and ceremonial a science to be learned and a field for mental culture; in its principles the foundation of strict morality; and in its fullest purpose the exercise of unbounded Charity, as well in the sense of "thinking no evil," as in that of relief and consolation to the distressed.

Pre.—Well said! And if no greater knowledge is vouchsafed to you, yet have you already learned much. In regard to the antiquity of the Order I think that for all practical purposes in the present day we need not go further back than the early part of the Eighteenth Century for the commencement of what we call Free or Speculative Masonry. That Guilds of Operative Masons existed for centuries before that there cannot be a doubt, and should you at any future period become interested in Masonic Antiquarian research you will be able to refer to the works of well-known authors* of the present century whose

**W. Bro. Rev. J. E. Cox*, P.G.C.; *W. Bro. Hughan; W. Bro. Whitehead; W. Bro. Rev. A. F. A. Woodford; W. Bro. Gould.*

labours have been exhaustive as to historical events in relation to those guilds. But you and I need not get into the region of fog and controversy. For our purpose it will suffice to date the Masonry we practise from about 1713, before which date there is not it appears any "Lodge" to which reference can be made. It has been said that 1716-17 is the starting point of modern Masonry, and that in 1725 the Grand Lodge of *all* England was formed. At that time Freemasonry had not its present organization. It consisted of but one degree, and the rank of F.C. and M.M. could only be obtained at Grand Lodge. Gradually the body of the Craft became Master Masons, and the Grand Lodge authorised the Lodges to confer the three degrees now known as the blue or symbolic degrees. From the "Mother" Grand Lodge, formed in 1717 or thereabout, Freemasonry reached France in 1725, Spain in 1728, Ireland in 1730, Italy in 1733, and Scotland in 1736. The oldest Constitutions of the Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons of England bear date 1722. And if further argument were needed in support of this statement it is a fact that at the recent exhibitions at York* and Worcester† of Masonic Curiosities and relics, no single item bore date of the 17th century. But I need not pursue this further, and only refer to it in order that you may not conceive the idea that our Ritual can be other than a comparatively modern composition, old as we are accustomed to consider anything when nearly a century has elapsed, but not ancient in the ordinary meaning of that word.

Stu.—Then at what date would you say that our present form of Ritual and Ceremonial was compiled.

Pre.—I can best answer that question by quoting from *Kenning's Cyclopædia.* In relation to the history of the Emulation Lodge of Improvement, the "working" adopted

* York, 1882. † Worcester, 1884.

by which is certainly more frequently referred to as the better and more correct method, it is stated that at the Union of the Lodges in 1813, working of ceremonies differed widely. At the Lodge of Reconciliation, which brought about the aforesaid Union, it was decided that all Lodges should work alike. *Brother Dr. Samuel Hemmings* gathered together the scattered elements of the work and brought them into due form up to a certain point, but did not complete his work. It was taken up by *Brother W. Williams* and subsequently abandoned, and the ritual was then reconstructed from its original elements. This new system became known as that worked by *Brother Peter Gilkes*, who was contemporary with *Williams*. Then *Gilkes'* pupil, *Bro. Stephen Barton Wilson* followed up his Master's work, whilst the uncompleted work of *Brother Dr. Hemming* was adopted by *Brother Peter Thompson* and is now used in several Lodges of Instruction. So that you see, in spite of the decision that "all Lodges should work alike" which was expressed in the Articles of Union in 1813, diversities and differences were, even at an early date thereafter, permitted to interfere with that "perfect unity" which it was declared should exist "until time shall be no more,"* and any departure from which was, according to the Constitutions of Freemasonry, improper and not to be justified or countenanced.

Stu.—It seems a pity that such should have been the case; but I presume some definite form of Ritual was resolved upon as that which all Lodges should work alike, and that the MSS. of that form of Ritual is extant.

Pre.—I know not! If such there be it is not for vulgar eyes to feast upon; and if there be no such thing, whence is the authority derived on which we found our present practices? If such a document could be produced how it

* "Articles of Union," A.D. 1813.—Clause III.

would set at rest all those so-called "authorised and perfect systems," and the diversities of practice which admit of and cause so much controversy! But not having such a reference we must take whatever "system" is first set before us, and endeavour to interpret obscure and unintelligible portions by the light of common sense, that we may the "better be enabled to distinguish and appreciate the connection of our whole system and the relative dependency of its several parts."

Stu.—It would appear from what you have stated that what was intended to have been constructed as the only form of ritual to be universally adopted was abandoned as an uncompleted work, and that another ritual was prepared and subsequently accepted. Do I understand you rightly?

Pre.—That is as I understand the matter. A well known Masonic authority* has stated that there are *three* different workings now, and considers it is not "loyal to our Grand Lodge, which has declared but for one," that such should be the case, and I quite agree with him on that point. He believes that there is some evidence of a ceremonial in practice in the 17th Century; but it is very doubtful if it were other than a form in use on the induction of a Member into a Guild of Operative Masons. Probably some portions of that ceremonial may have been utilised in the construction of the 18th Century ritual, and hence the introduction of words and phrases which denote antiquity. That the preservation of our oldest speculative form of ritual is a duty cannot be gainsaid, and certainly old words almost forgotten should be, as far as possible, retained if that ritual is worth support, as most of us believe it to be.

Stu.—And which of the "three systems" you refer to do you consider the best?

* *The Rev. Bro. A. F. A. Woodford.*

Pre.—Of one of them I have no practical knowledge; and it would be invidious, and in some quarters naturally objectionable to place the other two in comparison. Each has its beauties of expression, and one is decidedly more diffuse in verbiage than the other.

Stu.—Under what titles are these two systems respectively known?

Pre.—One is called "Stability working," and is that form of ritual which having been "abandoned" by *Bro. Dr. Hemming* was taken up and completed by *Bro. Peter Thompson*, a P.G.S.D. of the Grand Lodge. This has been preserved and practised in some of the Metropolitan Lodges under the leadership of that most worthy veteran of the craft *Brother Henry Muggeridge*, an able Lecturer and genial Preceptor, of whom it has been well said:—"He is one of the kindliest and best of men, the most pertinacious of beggars in the cause of charity, and one of the most skilful of Masons."* It is most probably for such reason, and for the great respect in which *Brother Muggeridge* has been held throughout a long life, that the "Stability system" has stood its ground amongst the Metropolitan Craft. But the "Emulation working" has by far the greater number of supporters. This is the system derived from *Brother Peter Gilkes*, and which has been fostered by a large number of very able teachers in the Craft. It is that system which we shall discuss with a view to consider many defects which have arisen in the process of transmission, and now threaten to destroy its purity and uniformity.

Stu.—Does not the working of the two systems simultaneously interfere with the progress of the Masonic student?

* Masonic Portraits.—"Old Mug." W. W. Morgan, *Freemason's Chronicle.*

Pre.—Very much so! There is sometimes a considerable "mixing," particularly in our Lodges of Instruction. In the Mother Lodges this does not so much matter, for in such as practice "Stability working" that form of ritual is alone heard, and similarly those which work "Emulation" conform to that system alone. But in the Instruction Lodges, Members of "Emulation" and "Stability" Lodges mingle, and in consequence confusion arises by a persistence in rendering the ritual according to the respective teachings. I believe this has tended more than anything else towards the errors of omission and addition which have made a jumble of what was a perfect ceremonial, and has given rise to more disputes and controversy than can be readily imagined.

Stu.—Disputes amongst Freemasons!

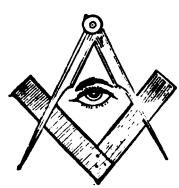
Pre.—Well, yes! They differ and dispute sometimes; but it may be fairly said with a perfect agreement at all times. That is to say, their arguments are never carried to the point of acrimony. It is—as it were—understood that varied opinions shall not interfere with peace and harmony, and opponents on points of divergencies submit to the rule which governs their meetings, be they under either "system." And this I would impress on you as a young Mason, never to let any correction which may be made in your own rehearsals induce you to take the slightest offence. Accept the substituted word or action suggested by the Preceptor of whatever Lodge of Instruction you may attend. Consider its value after you have left the place of tuition, and still retain your original text if you see better reasons for it than can be adduced for its substitute;

> "He that complies against his will
> Is of his own opinion still."*

* *Butler's* "Hudibras."

It is by such concessions in Masonic gatherings that factious opposition can be avoided, and the perfect calm which characterises a Lodge at work can be experienced. What that calm really means is well expressed in the words of an American poet, with which we will, if you please, now conclude our present interview:—

Oh! if there be a spot most sweet,
  Most full of bliss, most free from care,
'Tis where we on the *Level* meet
  Intent to part upon the *Square*.
Oh! If there be an hour of peace,
  It is when twilight's shadows fall,
And men their fretful labours cease,
  To mingle in the Masons' Hall.
Though factious storms, adverse and fierce,
  Should o'er the land affliction waft;
Why let them rage! they cannot pierce
  The curtained safety of the *Craft*.



Chip 2.

PRECEPTOR, STUDENT, AND P.M.

What is a Lodge—The Master's authority—Refreshment in open Lodge—The Lodge summons—The Register of attendance—Punctuality—Opening of the Lodge—Music in Lodges—The Gavel, its description, use and abuse—Knobs and excrescences v. Superfluities—The first command—Officers, their situations and duties—What is a Cowan?—Debated points in opening—"Just due"—Enlightenment—The Chaplain—The THREE GREAT LIGHTS—The position of Columns and Tracing board.

Pre.—

BRETHREN, I greet you both. You are in capital time for a tolerably long and I trust instructive evening. I propose, if you have no objection, to commence with the ceremonies of opening a Lodge, and believe we shall find that work sufficient for this present sitting.

Stu.—As you please, Brother Preceptor. I have informed my friend P.M. of the nature of the information you have already afforded, and, acting on your kind permission, he is now here to ascertain how far he can agree with your views respecting ritual.

P.M.—Being disposed, may I add, to give every consideration to the interpretations which you, Brother Preceptor, may put upon certain portions of our ritual and

ceremonial, although the same may differ from what I have been taught, and have accustomed myself to practise, in the several offices and subsequent management of my Lodge.

Pre.—That is all I shall ask for. Both our Brother Student and yourself will retain perfect liberty to discuss whatever propositions I may make. We will hold friendly argument thereon without imposing on either the acceptance of any definite conclusion. And now, having arranged for proceeding in an orderly and harmonious manner, let me first describe what is, in the ordinary acceptance of the term, a Lodge. I don't know that I can do this better than by quoting the REV. DR. OLIVER, who says—"A Lodge is not to be understood simply as a place where Masons assemble for the despatch of business, but of the aggregate body of its members. The latter is strictly speaking the Lodge, the former is only the Lodge-room."*

Stu.—That must be a matter of course, for I have already attended differently named Lodges at different times in the same Hall. I suppose that where a Lodge is opened, there it must be closed.

Pre.—Not of necessity. A Lodge opened in a certain place may continue as a Lodge working in another place, and be closed in yet another. Whilst the Brethren are together and under the rule of the W.M., with the THREE GREAT LIGHTS present, they are in open Lodge, no matter whether at work or at refreshment in other places than where they first assembled.

P.M.—I have proved that; for during my year of office as Master, I invariably "called off" after second time of rising, and in a due form, opportunity for explaining which may arise during our interviews, adjourned to banquet. The sense that the Lodge was still open greatly enhanced the sociability and good fellowship of its mem-

* *Oliver's* "Book of the Lodge," Aphorism vii.

bers. When the proper hour arrived, and the Tyler had claimed attention for Brethren dispersed elsewhere, the third enquiry was made, and the Lodge closed there and then without return to the room in which it was opened.

Pre.—An admirable plan, and one which merits general attention for many reasons. In the first place the Master retains during the whole of the meeting an authority over those present which he cannot possess but in open Lodge; for except in the capacity of Ruler in the Lodge he can exercise no interference with the will and pleasure of the Brethren, whose perfect freedom from his control commences immediately on the closing of the Lodge. 'Tis true that in courtesy this privilege of ruling is extended to him until the Brethren have finally separated, but it cannot be claimed as a right, and the authority to control might be, though in my experience it never has been, contested without infringing any Masonic Law or obligation. Brethren are "free to and free from" immediately after the P.M. has delivered the final address. Again, the Master can determine the limit and duration of the meeting, and so, closing his Lodge at an appropriate hour, take away all reasonable excuse for a longer stay than individual inclination may suggest. More might be said in favour of such arrangement, but for the present let this suffice.

P.M.—Permit me to add another observation on this subject. I have known occasions on which some matter of more or less importance has been neglected in the Lodge room, and which has been remembered during refreshment. On other occasions visitors, gratified with the associations connected with their visit, have desired to join the Lodge. Whilst the Lodge is open, and at the proper time, propositions can be made in remedy of such omissions, or for the purpose of introducing New Members, without any breach

of Masonic law or regulations, and at times I have known the opportunity for doing this to be of considerable advantage.

Pre.—Truly so. It may also, and I believe often does, prevent irregularities in preparation for the ensuing meeting, the summons for which should, in my opinion, contain no proposition which has not previously been made in open Lodge. Speaking of meetings I may observe that whilst it is, and properly so, the almost invariable custom to give seven days' notice to each Member prior to re-opening the Lodge, the Book of Constitutions is silent as to this custom or regulation except in respect of Lodges of Emergency.* No importance however attaches to this, for the Bye-Laws of each Lodge provide for sufficient notification. Much more important is the necessity for the Register of Attendance, which should always be in the ante-chamber in good time previous to the meeting. It is a most important book and occasions might and frequently do arise for its production elsewhere as a testimony in relation to events connected with the Lodge. Dr. Oliver says,† "No one should on any account be permitted to insert his name except he takes his place on the same evening as a Member or a Visitor of the Lodge." To many minds this may seem but a small matter, but in your experience Brother P.M. you have doubtless seen, as I have in mine, the necessity for such regulation, and how a neglect thereof has resulted in the abuse of the privileges of the Order.

P.M.—I have indeed, and have often reflected on the unworthiness of brethren who do not hestitate to avoid the work of the Lodge as a general rule of their conduct, and yet put in an appearance at the hour of refreshment

* "Book of Constitutions." 1884 edition, Section 185.
† *Oliver's* "Masonic Jurisprudence."

and "sign on" without having taken part in the previous proceedings. 'Tis true they have a right to their places at refreshment by virtue of their Membership Subscriptions, and so far their presence may be welcome. But such action appears to me to partake of mere Club association, and to have nothing in common with Freemasonry about it.

Pre.—Rely upon it that the character of a Lodge is frequently to be judged by the punctuality or want of punctuality in attendance of its Members. It cannot of course be always expected that every Member should be present at the exact moment appointed for meeting, but within a reasonable limit of time the Master should know who will surely be absent throughout the evening. Certainty in that respect would conduce greatly to perfect work. I quote largely from Dr. Oliver's recommendations because they are pithy and to the purpose. On this subject he says, "If you mean to attend your Lodge, be there at the hour mentioned in the summons. Whoever is late disturbs the Brethren and interrupts the Business of the Lodge."* To my mind the Lay Members of the Lodge should take their places in the Lodge room prior to and await the entrance of the W.M. and Officers in due order, remaining at attention until all are seated in their respective positions. Order and regularity are as essential at the commencement of proceedings as at any other period of Lodge work. In Lodges where music is permitted, the entry of the W.M. and his Officers to the accompaniment of a "Voluntary," is an attractive feature.

P.M.—But is there not a diversity of opinion in reference to the propriety of music in Lodges?

Pre.—I believe there is; and I don't wonder at it when in so many instances incapable brethren are appointed to

* *Oliver's* "Book of the Lodge," Aphorism ix.

the position of Organist. In many Lodges it is not at all unusual to give, "for the sake of the collar," that position to brethren who have never known, as one may say, "a note of music?" Better be altogether without its aid than have the solemnity of our work made ridiculous by inappropriate musical accompaniment. But where talent is combined with a knowledge of Ritual and a feeling of reverence, perfection is the result, and then the advantage of musical accessories is manifest, and the solemnity of our work made most impressive to those who come amongst us. As we proceed you will find that further allusion to this subject may be necessary.

P.M.—So far you have assembled the Brethren and have "seated" them; is that the general practice?

Pre.—Perhaps not. It is but a minor point; but when the principal Chair is first occupied a few moments to prevent confusion and to secure silence, are not lost. When all is in order and each Brother in his proper place the authority of the W.M. commences by his call to "*Assist to open,*" and one sound of his gavel (not repeated elsewhere, for at the moment he alone has authority) suffices to direct all present to rise to attention.

Stu.—Will you kindly inform me what is a true gavel? I have seen different implements of power used in different Lodges.

Pre.—MACKEY tells us that, "In the name as well as the application of this implement error has crept into the customs of the Lodges, 'the common gavel or setting maul' being spoken of as synonymous terms. The true form of the gavel is that of a stonemason's hammer. The W.M.'s gavel has also the name 'Hiram' given to it, 'because, as Solomon controlled and directed the workmen in the Temple by the assistance of Hiram, the builder, so does the Master preserve order in the Lodge by the aid

of the gavel.'"* The "setting maul" is altogether a differently constructed implement, and applied to a very different purpose. The former in Operative Masonry is to "knock off superfluous knobs and excrescences," the latter to assist in adjusting the perfect stone in its proper position. The "maul" is required in the third degree for illustration, but at no other time in either of the three ceremonies.

Stu.—I have been corrected when using the expression, "superfluous knobs and excrescences," and required to say "superfluities." Which expression do you think accords with the original ritual?

Pre.—The former, most decidedly. Our ancestors were not quite so "fine" in their choice of words as some of us appear to be. They called a spade a spade, and made plain what they intended to convey by the language they used. Knobs and excrescences are superfluities certainly, but the idea sought to be conveyed is that of removal, by force, of the rough or prominent portions of a stone which interferes with the production of a smooth surface required to fit it for a building. Superfluities may be of many kinds, removable by less powerful means than the use of a gavel, (or stone-mason's hammer) which, to use a technical term, *scappels* the rough ashlar to a straight surface without making it smooth, and leaves it prepared for the work of the chisel and mallet to "further smooth and prepare." The retention of the original phrase should not be interfered with, for the modern word is not by any means so expressive.

Stu.—I thank you for this explanation.

Pre.—It gratifies me that you should so early in our work make enquiries. What is the first command given by the W.M.?

* *Mackey's* "Lexicon of Freemasonry."

Stu.—To see . . . properly . . .

Pre.—This command should be literally executed by the I.G., who has not been directed to *hear* and cannot properly give the required reply without personal inspection. It is a distinctly different operation to that of "proving," which is necessary at "closing," to convince those present that close guard has been kept throughout the proceedings.

P.M.—I agree with you, although in my Lodge it is the practice to communicate certain sounds, which (being answered in like manner) have been deemed sufficient to announce due guard.

Pre.—I cannot admit that sufficiency, for it is in the experience of most of us that persons as yet unapproved of may be in waiting, and to them no part of our practices should be known. Moreover, it is not necessary to anticipate the most important of our series of sounds used in the several ceremonies. It takes away the solemn effect of, and almost renders absurd, the "ancient and venerable exhortation" when the proper time arrives for reference thereto.

P.M.—Truly; and I have often thought that the too frequent use of the implements of power in the E., W., and S., is to be condemned.

Pre.—No doubt; as we proceed you will find that I shall direct your attention to this more fully. For the present I shall merely observe that the communication made from the S., in consequence of the W.M.'s first command, need not be accompanied by any manual exercise on the part of the J.W. It serves no purpose whatever. But now, Brother Student, what is the second command from the Chair?

Stu.—"To order as E.A.P.F."

Pre.—Too frequently, but wrongly, so. The Brethren meet as F.M's. irrespective of degrees in the Order. It is

for the W.M. to call them to order, and to specify in what mannner by naming the degree in which the command is given. In this instance he should say "as F.M's. in the first degree." I pass on to ask you to name the Assistant Officers of a Lodge.

Stu.—These I understand to be four of the seven which by our constitutions are absolutely required in every Lodge, and totally irrespective of other Officers which the Lodge, by election in one case, and the Master, by appointment, in others, *may* have. The four comprise two Deacons, I.G. and T.

Pre.—Yes; the Deacons and I.G. may be considered as the immediate assistants of the respective principals, the S.D. being the Officer in waiting, if I may so term it, of the W.M., the J.D. of the S.W., and the I.G. of the J.W. A very little consideration of the "duties" required from them will convince you of the intention of our predecessors in creating such appointments. I may here remark that there is no mention of Deacons in any of the early Books of Constitutions, certainly not previous to 1797. In Preston's edition of "Illustrations," 1781, no such Officers are referred to; but in a later edition of that work, when describing the Ceremony of Installation, he makes mention of such Officers. Who answered for the position of the T. and his duty?

Stu.—The J.W.

Pre.—Why?

Stu.—I suppose because the T. was "outside the door of the Lodge" and it was not politic to call him to answer for himself.

Pre.—I see no reason whatever why he should not present himself and state his duty, receiving from the W.M. instructions to discharge the same. I presume you understood the answer given?

Stu.—In its general sense certainly, but although I can imagine what is meant by a "Cowan" further information as to the derivation of the word and its application would be useful.

Pre.—Well, it really means "one of the profane," that is, *not one of us.* In the Ritual of Freemasonry, America, 1835, it is stated, "The origin of this word is French, and was written *Chouan*, and the *h* was omitted in English without aspirating it, agreeable to cockney pronunciation. The Chouans were loyalists during the French Revolution, and were worse than eaves droppers to the Masons who originated the Revolution." But MACKEY says that "this explanation has been made by Anti-Masonic writers, and is, in his opinion, absurd; as the word was in use long before the French Revolution was ever meditated; and he thinks the word is more properly derived from the Greek *Kuon*, a dog, which was a term applied to those who had not been initiated into the Christian Mysteries, and that when borrowed by Freemason's it was in time corrupted into Cowan."* In the Lectures used at the Ritual of Freemasonry, 1717, the following curious punishment was said to be inflicted on a detected Cowan:—"To be placed under the eaves of the house in rainy weather till the water went in at his shoulders and out at his shoes." Hence a listener is called an eavesdropper.† I remember that years ago it was not unusual to hear a Brother cautioned against too free converse on Masonic matters in the presence of strangers, by the remark "It rains!" alluding, of course, to the presence of possible "eavesdroppers." Who answered for the I.G.'s position?

Stu.—The S.W.

Pre.—Right! and who for his duty?

* *Mackey's* "Lexicon of Freemasonry."

† *Oliver's* "Landmarks."

Stu.—The S.W. also.

Pre.—Many Lodges adopt a different method, and the Assistant Officers within the Lodge are required themselves to state their respective duties. A good plan, for it tends to ensure punctuality in attendance, and gives evidence of a proper acquaintance with the nature of the work expected from them. In reference to these answers let the S.W. be careful to say "within the entrance" not "within the *door*" when he states the position of I.G. If he thinks for a moment he will see how ridiculous the latter expression is. And in his reply as to position of the S.D. he should also be careful to reply "at *or near*." These last two words recognise that the position of honour allotted to the chief rulers of the Order, and to distinguished visitors, is on the immediate right of the W.M. The S.D. in courtesy should give place to these, and such courtesy never fails to be observed in favour of the Lodge. So long as the S.D. is *near* the right of the W.M. he is properly placed to receive commands. What was the W.M.'s enquiry as to the position of the J.W.?

Stu.—Brother J.W. what is your constant place in the Lodge?

Pre.—Constant! That is according to the working of the Emulation Lodge in 1871, at least so the "books" say, but of late years that word is not so generally used as prior to that date. Reasons for omission are not given, nor can there be any so potent for its non-use as there are for its retention. It expresses the fact that during the entire proceedings the place of observation by the J.W. should not be left on any pretence, lest the work should be hindered by his absence. Give me the J.W.'s reply to the enquiry as to his duty?

Stu.—To mark the sun at its meridian; to call——

Pre.—Stay! the latter portion of his reply is, as far as

I know, universally the same; but as regards the former portion, in some Lodges the word *observe* is used instead of *mark*, and *the* instead of *its*. I think "observe" the more expressive word for many reasons, and note that DR. OLIVER in his "Book of the Lodge" uses it. *Its* meridian must be correct, for the other expression can refer only to a place, and not to the highest point attainable by the object referred to. It means the highest altitude of the planet from the earth at any given point of the earth's surface.—Wolsey *(King Henry* VIII.*)* says:—

"I have reached the highest point of all my greatness,
And from that *full meridian* of my glory
I haste me to my setting."

It may appear a trivial matter to comment upon, but in the pure working of Freemasonry trifles should not be beneath our attention;

"Large streams from little fountains flow,
Tall oaks from little acorns grow."

Stu.—I grant that, Brother Preceptor; but is there not a risk of being dubbed "pedantic" when notice is taken of apparently small matters.

Pre.—There is that risk certainly; but what penalty attaches thereto which a man having the courage of his own convictions need fear? But to proceed:—How did the S.W. explain his duty?

Stu.—To mark the S.S., to close, &c. . . . . after having seen that every Brother has had his due.

Pre.—The same observation I have already made applies in this instance also to the work mark. In regard to the concluding sentence the S.W. should have said *just* due.

P.M.—When I was Deacon in my own Lodge that was the expression used. Of late years, however, the word *just* has been omitted.

Pre.—For what reason?

P.M.—I have heard of none; indeed, when enquiry has been made the only reply given has been that the W.M. or one of the P.M.'s had ruled it so, as being in accordance with the tuition he had received.

Pre.—But here are reasons for its retention:—In the Ancient charges on the Management of the Craft in working, you will find it stated that "The Master shall not give more wages to any Brother or Apprentice than he *really may deserve;* both the Master and the Masons receiving their wages *justly*, &c." And in the sixth section of our first Lecture in defining Justice we are told that it "is that station or boundary of right by which we are taught to render to every one his *just* due, and that without distinction." If these are not sufficient, others could be adduced; but you will, doubtless, agree that further argument is not necessary, and that the word *just* ought to be retained.

P.M.—On this point we certainly are agreed. Permit me to take up the opening Ceremony at this point, and ask you how the W.M. should address the I.P.M. when putting the next question.

Pre.—As "Worthy and Worshipful." I know in some Lodges the former adjective is omitted, but in most it is retained. Past Masters are always entitled to the prefix of Worshipful, and the Immediate P.M. to the acknowledgment of a further title of honour as having last passed worthily through the chair of K.S. Can you see any reasonable objection to this?

P.M.—No, it appears to me to be but just, as well as courteous. In the I.P.M.'s answer to the W.M. should he say "rises to open and *enliven* or *enlighten* the day?"

Pre.—Enlighten, most assuredly. Take the dictionary definitions of the respective words. Enliven—to make cheerful, gay, joyous, sprightly, &c. Enlighten—to illuminate, instruct, inform, to furnish with clear views, &c.

Now which of those can best apply to the prayer in the Installation Ceremony that the W.M. may be endued with "wisdom to comprehend, that he may the better be enabled to *enlighten* the minds of his Brethren," and the subsequent injunction that he should "imitate the grand luminary of nature, and in like manner communicate light and instruction?" Dr. Kenning, quoted by Dr. Oliver, refers to "the Sun which enlightens the earth with its refulgent rays, and gives light and life to all things here below." Surely you cannot want further proof that *enlighten* is the proper word to be used by the I.P.M.

P.M.—I do not. Now, as to the prayer which follows, should that be given by the W.M. or the Chaplain? I have known it stated that the former is the only proper person to open the Lodge, and that inasmuch as the prayer contains the words "before I declare it open," he cannot permit its delivery by any other than himself.

Pre.—You are quite right as to the W.M. opening the Lodge, he is placed there for that purpose; but that does not prevent the prayer being delivered by the Chaplain. You have but to substitute "it is declared" for "I declare" and the objection you suggest is removed, and the declaration of the opening is still left with the Master. Whilst on this subject it may with propriety be said that in all Lodges wherein a Minister of religion officiates as Chaplain a greater degree of solemnity and reverence is observable throughout the work than in those which possess no such Officer. MACKEY says: "All the Ceremonies of our Order are prefaced and terminated with prayer, because Freemasonry is a religious Institution; and because we thereby show our dependence on, and our faith and trust in God."* And as yet I have met with none indisposed to admit that the commencement

* *Mackey's* "Lexicon of Freemasonry."

of work with devotional exercise, impressively rendered, tends greatly to enhance the continuation thereof in peace, and the termination with harmony. I may add that the Master's declaration should terminate with the words "in the first degree."

P.M.—Why, necessarily?

Pre.—Because the Brethren have assembled as Freemasons irrespective of degrees, and it is requisite to prevent any possible error on the part of advanced Brethren by intimating the exact degree in which the Lodge is about to work. Now I desire to call your attention to the next proceeding and ask you to remember what I have already said about the too free use of the Gavel. There is no necessity for, nor any useful purpose effected by, sounding thrice. Once only in the E., W., S., and within and without the entrance, suffices to announce in due course the completion of the opening to all present as well as to the outer guard; and again, the means by which a first admission to the Lodge is obtained is not prematurely disclosed. Think of this, Brother P.M. If you say that thrice is typical of the degree, I reply that there is no reason for such formal notification at the time we are now speaking of, and that if the Gavel must be heard, once is quite as typical of the *first* degree as are the greater number, and I am sure is more in character with the quality of Order in so far as it is less tumultuous.

P.M.—I fear your opinion, Bro. Preceptor will be challenged by many who think the present practice, which you must admit is general, has some meaning.

Pre.—Doubtless; but that will not prevent me from maintaining such opinion until my objectors can produce as good reasons for as I adduce against such practice. Moreover, as we proceed you will find that I further condemn the too frequent use of the implement of power

and the introduction of unnecessary, and, to some minds, vulgar noise. But for the present let this suffice. The Lodge being declared open what should next be done?

P.M.—The THREE GREAT LIGHTS should be arranged by the I.P.M.

Pre.—In what manner?

P.M.—I am not aware that there should be any definite rule as to this, and have noticed that the manner of arrangement is subject to constant variation, as though no symbol of importance is attachable thereto.

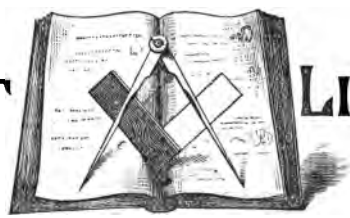
Pre.—But that is not so. All things should be done in order, and in no greater respect than in this matter should order be more considered, for there is reason to be given for the position of each light. Before explaining their respective positions let me remark that the veneration in which we should hold the "Guide to our faith" is not forcibly expressed by its deposit amongst the many necessary items which are temporarily placed on the W.M.'s pedestal during labour. To my mind THE THREE GREAT LIGHTS should be supported by a separate pedestal placed somewhat in advance of that of the W.M., as may be seen in one or two Lodges working in London. In some Provincial Lodges a special ALTAR is set up in the West, which, however, is not at all the proper situation for it. At no time during Lodge work should these GREAT LIGHTS remain unexposed even for the briefest interval, and therefore they should be sufficiently removed from any possibility of disturbance arising from the requisite discharge of certain functions by the W.M. in connection with his duties. The V.S.L. should be open towards the E., that when necessary (and in former days it was the custom) the Master may read therefrom; the Square should extend towards the W., for "the Craft being obligated within the Square are consequently bound to

act thereon;" and the emblem of the Grand Master's dignity should extend towards the E. to signify that the W.M. should keep within the compass of the authority delegated to him by the "Chief head and ruler" of the Craft. Dr. Oliver says, "We have no especial directions about the place at which the V.S.L. ought to be unclosed by the P.M. as the consummation of opening a Lodge. Any chapter of any book will be correct provided it has a direct application to some circumstance connected with the degree under consideration.* Mackey says that the Greater Light should be opened at Psalm cxxxiii.,† ("*Behold how good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity.*") And as that Psalm has a general application to all our work in Lodge, in my opinion it suffices for all degrees, and my practice is, where the control rests with me, to retain that opening throughout the work.

P.M.—I think you are right; but it has been urged upon me that the Initiate should at a certain moment see the Great Lights so placed presented towards himself.

Pre.—That is not at all necessary, notwithstanding that his attention is directed to them. He will learn, as all others have or should have done, that these emblems, besides having a general application to the whole Craft, have a special relation to the Master as the rule and guide whereby he may hope to govern his Lodge with satisfaction to his Brethren, and lay up for himself a crown of joy and rejoicing in the great hereafter. In this regard I look upon them as more appertaining to the Master than to any other individual whomsoever in the Lodge; and that without in the least diminishing their moral teaching to every Member of our Order. What that moral teaching is let the following beautiful Poem illustrate:—

* *Rev. Dr. Oliver's* "Landmarks." † *Mackey's* Lexicon of Freemasonry.

THE THREE GREAT  LIGHTS

WE hold in Bonds of Brotherhood those men (and only those)
Whose hearts expand with others' joys, feel keenly others' woes,
And disregarding rules and forms will aye maintain the Right!
Who judge not from appearances, oft-times deceitful they,
But ever hail true virtue and its humanizing sway,
As 'tis measured by the **Compasses**, the **Angle**, and the **Light**!

Our **Compasses** adjust we so that limits be defined
Within whose arcs there's room for every type of humankind,
For every man man's brother is in GOD's eternal sight!
Within the space thus circumscribed aye Sanctuary be
To which in times of grief and wrong the burdened heart may flee,
And its cause be vindicated by the **Angle** and the **Light**!

The setting of that **Angle** calls for finished skill and care,
To see its lines be laid aright, its joint precisely square;
Else the justest Work produced our rules may cause us oft to slight,
And we may be constrained to err, and even to condemn
The handicraft of Talent fine, the Acts and Deeds of them
Whom the MASTER* will Himself approve in stronger purer **Light**!

(*) "The Master is come and calleth for thee."—JOHN xi. 28.

Seek we that **Light** at its Great Source, nor dare we to presume
To cast aside the block we've tried amidst uncertain gloom;
In the MERIDIAN SUNLIGHT test it! Not in Shades of Night!
For errors manifold are made, and errors made must be,
By those who of the Standard Guides lack even one of Three,
Be the One of Three the **Compasses**, the **Angle**, or the **Light**!

When we shall find our fellow-man borne down by treatment hard
Bruised and broken though he be, him may we not discard,
For oft-times of a broken block choose we the fragment white,
And shaping it with nicest Art, a Miniature fair
We place "*within the Temple*," before the Master there,
When all the world without is dark, it shines† in radiance rare,
A perfect Block! A finished Work! A model of a Square!
When 'tis tested by the **Compasses**, the **Angle**, and the **Light**!

This is the truest Masonry! The Universal Creed!
Without it ne'er can guards and signs a Mason make, indeed
A shapeless mass he prostrate lies before the Orient bright;
But with it oft, as once on earth the MASTER wisely said,
The "*Block the Builders cast away becomes the Corner's Head!*" ‡
The noblest Work exhibited in GOD's refulgent **Light**.

(†) "And the Light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."—JOHN i. 5.

(‡) "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."—LUKE xx. 17.

P.M.—A grand poem! Is it yours?

Pre.—The composition is not. For many reasons I am not permitted to disclose the name of its author, but I have a property in the MSS. which entitles me to give it the publicity it merits. It is a most attractive poem for recitation, and you and your friends will be welcome to

make use of it for such purpose. I need hardly say it is protected from any further publication without my consent.

P.M.—I thank you, and will certainly do what is in my power to carry out your desire that it should be widely known as an instructive moral lesson.

Pre.—Would that the principles it inculcates were more universally practised! Then indeed would "the bonds of brotherhood" be strong and perfect in the fullest sense. But to return to our discourse; what other acts accompany the opening of the Lodge?

P.M.—The Wardens place their columns in position, and the Deacons expose T.B. of the degree.

Pre.—As to the placing of columns, by the S.W. vertically, by the J.W. horizontally, I would remark upon a common error entertained by many, that even before opening and after closing, the J.W. should place his column in a perpendicular position. Unless the Lodge be at work or at refreshment in open Lodge, there is no J.W. officiating, and therefore no emblem of office. His column is at all times lowered except at refreshment. As to the tracing board, that I consider should be placed on the floor of the Lodge, and not "anywhere" in a perpendicular position. In no Masonic work can I find our Tracing Boards spoken of as wall furniture or ornaments, and in common with many Brethren I entertain a strong objection to their open display except when a Lodge is at work; and then only the T.B. of the degree in which work is being performed should be exposed. Tracing Boards are quite out of place as mural decorations, and indeed anywhere except on the floor of the Lodge. OLIVER says in his "Landmarks," "I have before me a tracing board or *floorcloth*."* MACKEY describes the tracing board as "a painting representing the emblems peculiar to a

* *Oliver's* "Landmarks."

degree arranged for the convenience of the lecturer. Each degree of symbolic Freemasonry has its tracing board, which are distinguished as tracing boards the first, second, and third. It is therefore the same as the *flooring* or *carpet*. Formerly it was the custom to inscribe the designs of the tracing board on the floor of the Lodge-room in chalk, which was wiped out when the Lodge was closed."* The term "tracing board" is often confounded with "trestle board," but they are distinct appliances, the one being a representation of "emblems appropriate to the degree;" the other, but seldom introduced as part of the Lodge furniture, being a plain board on trestles, spoken of in our lectures as intended "for the Master to lay lines and draw designs upon." No connection between the two is to be found in any of the Masonic works I have met with, and I possess a representation of a Lodge furnished for work, and in which the "trestle board" is depicted. Let me refer you to that beautiful comparison between the immoveable jewels and the furniture of the Lodge, in the fifth section of the first lecture, and substitute the word "trestle" for "tracing," an error reproduced *ad nauseam* in all published rituals, and tell me what you think can be really meant.

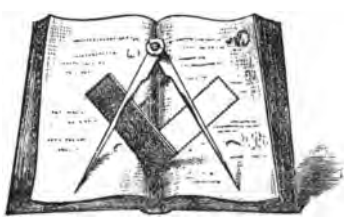
P.M.—But I have never yet seen a trestle board in any Lodge.

Pre.—Nor I; but originally it was certainly part of the appurtenances of a Lodge at work, and should be now if the comparison I have referred to is to be logically maintained. But I'll not now exhaust your attention by further argument. Probably I'll make this matter of "tracing" *v.* "trestle" board the subject of a special *Chip*, contenting myself for the present by holding that the proper position for the tracing board is in the centre on the floor of the

* *Mackey's* Lexicon of Freemasonry.

Lodge-room, where every member and visitor may have it in full view on entering the open Lodge and thereby learn without other information what is expected from him before he takes his seat. And now, Brothers P.M. and Student, having opened the Lodge, we will defer to our next meeting the consideration of "business prior to Initiation," and in respect of which I may have much to say in the interests of all Freemasons, and particularly of those two important Officers in each Lodge, the Treasurer and the Secretary. Meanwhile may all good attend you.

P.M.—Au revoir, Brother Preceptor, you have given us somewhat to think of between this and our next meeting, and I hope with profit.



Chip 3.

PRECEPTOR, P.M., TREASURER, SECRETARY AND STUDENT.

Business prior to Initiation—Minutes and their Confirmation—Propositions for Initiation and Joining—The "fiat of the W.M."—The Ballot its use and abuse—Turbulent Members—The Declaration—The "state of poverty"—The Treasurer's duty.

P.M.

GOOD EVENING Brother Preceptor on behalf of my companions and myself. Here are our Brothers Secretary and Treasurer, to whom I mentioned what you had in view as the subject for our present interview; and who, thinking our discussion might be of interest to them in their official capacity, have desired this introduction.

Pre.—They are welcome, as indeed will be any other Brethren you may induce to attend our meetings. Be seated, Brethren. Let me see! "Business prior to Initiation" was the subject named for consideration this evening, was it not? Well! the Lodge having been duly opened, attention is called for the reading of the minutes by the Secretary. It is a fact not generally known that the Book of Constitutions and the bye-laws of our Lodges, in most instances, are silent as to the requirement or necessity for reading the previous minutes at every Lodge meeting. It is ordered by the former,* that previous to the Installation of the Master the minutes of the preceding meeting of the Lodge be read and confirmed "so far at least as to

* "Book of Constitutions," Rule 130, New Edition.

the Election of the Master;" but no reference is made to order of procedure at other meetings. It is, however, the custom to read the previous minutes on each occasion of meeting.

Sec.—The propriety of reading the minutes I have never known to be questioned; but we have had in our Lodge and elsewhere many arguments as to what is meant by "confirmation of minutes," some worthy Brethren holding that it signifies only that the previous business has been correctly recorded, and admits of no further debate or decision, being final for all purposes of good or evil affecting the Lodge; and others that it is open to individual members to dissent from the resolutions of the former meeting and to propose that they be expunged, or rather "not confirmed," as the absolute wish or intent of the general body of members. If I incline to the former view it is because of the confusion which I apprehend might ensue by disturbance of arrangements already made in agreement with the resolutions passed in open Lodge, and which it would be too late to remedy if an adverse opinion prevailed at the subsequent meeting. Do you agree with me?

Pre.—Well, no! In the present uncertainty as to the qualifications and powers of those who preside, as well over public meetings and societies as over our Lodges, it is very difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion. The rulings of many men so placed are at times capricious, and too frequently principles are sacrificed to expediency. But if the true definition of the word Confirmation is "the act of ratifying, establishing, or strengthening," then the "putting for confirmation" must mean that it is desired to make firm by a second expression of opinion that which had been formerly resolved upon, and in respect of which no change of opinion had arisen during the interval between the previous and the then present meeting. That's my view!

But whilst this has been held at one time, even in our own Grand Lodge, as the correct meaning of the phrase, the reverse proposition has also been ruled, and in the same dignified body, and that too on consecutive meetings and in discussion of the same proposal.* Dr. Oliver says,† "No resolution of a Lodge, or any other business, how unanimously soever it may have been agreed to in the first instance, becomes binding, and no action can be taken upon it, till it has been confirmed by open voting at a subsequent regular meeting, with at least five Master Masons and members of the Lodge present; for as no business can be transacted at a Lodge of Emergency, except what is named in the summons, it would be improper at such a casual meeting of the Brethren to read any minutes except those which distinctly refer to the matter for which the Special Lodge has been convened. So stands the law, and a very judicious law it is; for it prevents all factious intriguing, which could scarcely fail to be occasionally successful if a resolution or law established by a majority of votes at one Lodge were irreversible at any other." Now, this is certainly logical and quite in accord with all known precedents for making laws and regulations for the government of bodies or societies of men, and I consider should be the invariable rule in regard to such portions of our minutes as relate to other than completed business. The bye-laws of each Lodge can, and in most cases do, provide for the immediate payment of small sums of money for charitable purposes voted in Lodge; the proposition, at one Lodge Meeting, of

* Grand Lodge Minutes, March 1880, June 1880, on the question of appointment of a Committee of Past Masters voted December 1869, and confirmed March 1870, to enquire into and report upon the respective systems of Masonic working now in practice, with a view to secure greater Uniformity.—*Vide* Masonic Journals of above dates.

"† Masonic Jurisprudence," pp. 187-8.

Initiates and joining members have confirmation by the act of acceptance, or non-confirmation by the act of rejection, at a subsequent meeting; and there is only left such propositions as require consideration before being carried, and for the reasons already given these should await confirmation and, if necessary, further debate before becoming irrevocable, no matter if a certain amount of inconvenience might ensue from the necessary delay. You may be assured that in this, as in many other business matters *Festina lente*,* the punning motto of the Onslow family, is a golden rule of procedure.

P.M.—I think your argument a good one and worthy of consideration. I doubt, however, of its general acceptance for it will attack much prejudice, and in many instances your plan would interfere with special desires in frequent cases influenced by personal considerations.

Pre.—Well, it may be so, and there is no compulsion towards either course. The "go as you please" practice of the present day affects this question of "Confirmation of Minutes" as it does many other more objectionable observances in Lodge working. Consider "the Minutes are confirmed, Brother Secretary" and let us get on to another subject.

Sec.—As the next business is that of balloting for Initiates and Joining Members we should like to have your views thereon.

Pre.—My remarks must be condensed, for this portion of Masonic work has such an important bearing on the general welfare of the Craft, its progress and improvement, that to give it the full consideration it deserves would require more time than we can spare, for in all probability you are becoming anxious to enter upon Ceremonial

* *Festina lente* (hasten slowly), a miserable pun on the proper name Onslow.

working. But we won't dismiss this subject altogether. First let me say that, expediency and desire to increase the muster roll notwithstanding, all propositions which have to stand the test of the ballot should be made in open Lodge. The "fiat of the W.M." (Let it be done!) is to my mind an innovation and a very serious one. Probably introduced to meet very exceptional cases of emergency it has gradually become a medium whereby introductions into Freemasonry are made on the very shortest possible notice, and to the hindrance of the necessary enquiries before voting. In consequence many abuses result, and I conscientiously believe men are thereby permitted to join the Order who might otherwise have been proved unfitted for it. It is a very commendable practice in some Lodges to require from both the proposer and seconder of a Candidate an unreserved statement in open Lodge of their personal acquaintance with him, and their assurance as to his moral behaviour, responsibility, and fitness for admission into the Order, and it is a great pity that this practice is not universal. Before any of our Members consent to nominate any person for Initiation let the following most excellent recommendation be observed: "Let them (the Candidates) first consider their income and family and know that Freemasonry requires ability, attendance, and a good appearance to maintain and support its ancient and honorable grandeur."* If this were always done we should be spared such an incident as the following:—A Brother of but a few months standing brought great disgrace, not only upon himself, but on the Lodge which had only recently initiated him, and when surprise was expressed that he should have ever been proposed his proposer had to admit that until the day he had agreed to nominate him at the request of a friend, who was not himself a Freemason, the offending Brother had

* "Ahiman Rezon," 1756.

been a perfect stranger to him; and to cap the whole transaction his seconder acted on the conviction that "what Brother Proposer did must be right," and had himself no better knowledge of the Candidate. Is this an uncommon incident? I fear not, for experience teaches us that there is but little selection. "All is fish that comes to the net," in some quarters, and the multiplication of Lodges (another matter to be considered at a future time) has of late caused so much rivalry in the race for "big Lodges," that no consideration is given to the qualifications which would "cement and adorn" the daughters of our Mother Grand Lodge. It would be a good thing for Freemasonry if no Brother would propose a person to join the Order until after a preliminary introduction to the Members of his own family. Our wives and daughters, "our sisters, our cousins, and our aunts," would soon tell us how far he might be relied upon for fidelity to Masonic obligations. The "home" is the first place whereat we should first study the qualities of future associates, before we connect them with our Lodges. But there, did I not say that this subject could be enlarged upon, and that I would condense my remarks?

P.M.—We pray you not to do so. It interests us all, and so far we agree with what you have said. Please proceed.

Pre.—Not further here as to "proposals of candidates." It may be that in the Ceremony of Initiation I may take up the matter again. Let me now refer to the Ballot about to be taken. In the "*Revised Regulations*, 1767," it was declared "that unanimity in the choice of candidates was considered essential. No man can be entered a Brother in any particular Lodge, or admitted a member thereof, without the *unanimous* consent of all the members of the Lodge then present when the candidate is proposed, and when this consent is formally asked by the Master."

One black ball was then sufficient for rejection, and in some Lodges that rule still holds good. The present Regulations of Grand Lodge decide against election if on the ballot three black balls appear against the candidate, but reserves to each Lodge the power of enacting that one or two black balls shall exclude. In no case can a ballot be dispensed with, and a profound secrecy in respect of the voting must be observed. Under certain circumstances and at the will of the Master, a reconsideration of the ballot may take place once and once only.* The "secrecy of the ballot" here spoken of is most jealously guarded by the highest Masonic authority, and any attempt to extract from the Brethren the manner in which their privilege of voting is or has been exercised subjects the enquirers, either collectively as a Lodge or individually as members, on complaint to the Board of General Purposes and proof of the attempt, to suspension from all Masonic privileges during such period as the Board may determine. The ballot is an inherent privilege of all subordinate Lodges, not subject to dispensation or interference of the Grand Lodge, because, as the ancient constitutions say, "The members of a particular Lodge are the best judges of it; and because if a turbulent member should be imposed upon them it might spoil their harmony or hinder the freedom of their communications, or even break and disperse the Lodge, which ought to be avoided by all true and faithful."† A description of the general, and what is believed to be the most correct, usage in balloting for candidates as practised in America, is given by the author whose words I have just quoted, and they are worthy of your attention. Whilst, however, the ballot is a "great privilege" when used in a perfectly legitimate manner

* *Oliver's* "Masonic Jurisprudence."

† *Mackey's* "Lexicon of Freemasonry."

it is liable to abuse and may be made by unscrupulous members of a Lodge a means for shaking its entire structure to its very foundation. Unfortunately instances of this abuse have been frequent of late years, and have brought about much discredit and humiliation on many who have not merited punishment. When for purposes of spite, or the exercise of some other unmasonic spirit, two or three or more brethren in a Lodge combine to prostitute the uses of the ballot to feelings of reckless opposition or vindictive passions, frequently not hesitating to declare openly that the "Master shall do no work during his term of office," the ballot is made an instrument of terror alike to those who are seeking admission as to those who have given offence. It then becomes an evil which calls for the fullest exercise of superior Masonic authority to deprecate and punish.

P.M.—But, Brother Preceptor, what can a Master do in the face of such an evident combination as you suggest; the whole proceeding partaking of secrecy that must not be, according to the principles of the ballot, interfered with? I see a great difficulty in such a case, but the remedy does not so readily appear.

Pre.—Bear in mind that each Member of a Lodge, from Master to the youngest Initiate, has equal rights to submit a Masonic grievance to the judgment of a regular constituted authority. If the peace and harmony of a Lodge be threatened by practices such as I have described, and the Master finds that his work is impeded, he should at once take his warrant and his complaint to that authority. The full circumstances of the case would be, at his request, inquired into, and though probably the disturbing Brethren might escape identification, which identification might not indeed be sought for, a solution of the existing difficulty would doubtless be found, and advice given in the

interests of the Lodge which the respective parties to the dispute might find it advisable to act upon; for you may rely upon it that some penalty affecting the Lodge collectively and individually would attach to any further continuance of the objectionable conduct of "turbulent Members."

P.M.—Do you know of any case bearing on this subject which has been submitted to enquiry.

Pre.—Yes. In one of recent date, consequent on a personal resentment of a W.M's. action relative to appointment of Officers—it matters not whether such action was or was not wise or prudent, that is not the question—a small minority in a certain Lodge set itself in antagonism to the Principal Officers, and in pursuance of a publicly declared intention black-balled indiscriminately all persons proposed for membership. To avert the almost certain results of such determined opposition the loyal Members of the Lodge, without due consideration of the inadvisability of the proceedings, sought by means of a circular to obtain replies to questions of such a nature as totally ignored the secrecy and integrity of the ballot, and thereby put themselves in the power of the "turbulent" minority, who, complaining of such interference with Masonic privilege, notwithstanding their own aggression, secured the suspension of the Lodge itself. The question of the provocation given had nothing to do with the act of interference with the privileges of the ballot, and in the result offended and offenders all suffered alike. So that you see by this how jealously the "profound secrecy" of the ballot is guarded, and how necessary it is in such cases as that recorded, and in all others of similar character, to take other steps to secure protection from the disloyal and undisiplined acts of those who would disturb peace and harmony. I need not further enlarge on this subject and

will proceed to other matters. Let us therefore presume that the Candidate for Initiation has been "approved of" in due course, and that proper preparation has been ordered. What follows?

P.M.—The usual declaration by the Candidate by which the requirement of the regulations that "any individual who cannot write shall be ineligible to be admitted into the Order" is complied with.

Pre.—In connection with which requirement I would observe that as the W.M. is himself responsible for whatever may be done, or left undone, in connection with the "work," he should have the evidence of such compliance with the regulation placed before him in the interval which almost invariably occurs between his order given and the completion of the preparation. It should be the duty of the S.D. to submit the signed document to him for his inspection and satisfaction.

P.M.—I have never seen this done in any Lodge.

Pre.—I have; and on the principle that no man should rely upon others for the discharge of a duty in respect of which he is personally responsible, and because he can be so easily assured as to its proper performance, I recommend the adoption of the same proceeding in all Lodges. What has been the practice amongst your Brethren in relation to the "state of poverty" required to be assumed in course of preparation.

P.M.—The absolute entrustment of all that represents value to the care of the preparing Officer.

Pre.—That is the usual custom; but a better plan is to have such portion or equivalent as would represent fees or dues placed in charge of the Secretary or Treasurer in attendance with proper acknowledgement. It will be quite as easy for the W.M. to say later on "you *have been* called upon" as "you *will be* called upon," and the difference of

meaning is great. You may not have heard, but it is nevertheless a fact that many persons have received Initiation without discharging their monetary obligation. This has at times occurred owing to the good nature, though neglect of duty, of the Secretary or Treasurer, who have been satisfied with excuses for the moment and assurances of prompt attention on the morrow, which morrow has never arrived, nor the Initiate himself at any subsequent meeting. You may think this romancing, but it is not, and it should be easily seen how, even with the best motives on all sides, confidence and honest intention may alike be thwarted by force of circumstances. If it were worth while enquiring into doubtless the Audit Accounts of more than one Lodge in past years could verify these remarks. Therefore, as no wrong can be done by anticipating the proper destination of some portion of that of which divestiture must be made, no more fit or proper moment for the payment of fees could be chosen than before admission is granted. What say you?

Treas.—That your practice, if such it be, is assuredly the better of the two, and I shall henceforth adopt it.

Pre.—It obtains in Lodges with which I am connected, and has not, to my knowledge, given other than satisfaction. It certainly makes assurance doubly sure. And now there remains nothing to add to the business of the antechamber and all is ready for the Ceremony of Initiation, which shall be treated of at our next interview.

Stu.—With your permission I should be glad to have the company of the W.M. and Wardens of my Lodge when next we meet.

Pre.—By all means. We shall then make, as to numbers, a "perfect Lodge," and probably thereby be enabled to continue our work with increasing facility and greater benefits to each other.

Chip 4.

PRECEPTOR, P.M., W.M., S. & J. WARDENS, TREASURER, SECRETARY AND STUDENT.

The first introduction to the Order—Its importance—First impressions—Qualifications of W.M. should be proved—Solemnity of Lodge Work—The Alarm and its result—Salutes and "entry drill"—Admission in due form—The first question and its unprompted reply—The abuse of the Gavel—The force of imagination—The Battery—The entry at S. and W. Gates—Presentation and enquiries—The Advance—Deacons as supporters.

P.M.—

AS promised, Brother Preceptor, we bring with us the three other Brethren mentioned at our last interview. Let me hope we shall not increase the amount of labour you have undertaken on our behalf.

Pre.—I am glad to see you all; and in reply to you, Brother P.M., you cannot surround me by too many attentive hearers, nor will you increase my labour thereby. but rather make my work more profitable. Pray be seated and let us proceed to business. I presume that what our new companions have not heard from me has been communicated to them.

P.M.—As far as possible, yes! Our Brother Student has been very appreciative of your remarks, and has conveyed them with very commendable correctness to several members of his Lodge; and amongst others to the Master and Wardens now introduced to you.

W.M.—And has thereby not only excited a deep interest in your work in the minds of most of us, but has shewn his qualifications for Masonic study, and a fitness for that preferment which is, or at least should be, the invariable accompaniment of merit and ability. We foresee in him a very able and intelligent Officer, and, we trust, future W.M.

Pre.—That's well! If these interviews should be conducive to the advance in Masonic Science of but himself they will not have been held in vain, and my labours will be amply rewarded. We have, as you are aware, reached that point of procedure in connection with Initiation at which the first introduction of the Candidate into the mystic chamber of the Lodge is about to take place. And here, although at the cost of delay in commencing my remarks on portions of the Ceremonial, I think it advisable to impress on your minds, by references to the opinions of well-known Masonic authors, the serious importance of the work about to be performed. Dr. OLIVER, in his "Landmarks" says: "At a first view the Ceremonies of Initiation, Passing, and Raising may be considered unnecessary, all Ceremonies abstractedly may be thus interpreted; but they are in reality of the utmost importance. They convey to the mind, by action, a series of wholesome truths; they make a strong and lasting impression, and as the lesson which they teach is connected with mental improvement both in science and morals, a serious attention to the explanation of the Ceremonial will be amply repaid by the beautiful development of the Masonic system, which this process cannot fail

to establish."* This opinion is worthy of the most serious consideration by every Freemason; but especially so by every Master of a Lodge, with whom rests the chief burden of the work, and who can, according to his ability and understanding or to his want thereof, either attract or repel the Novitiate by his manner of conducting the introductory ceremony. It is certain that many worthy and intelligent men have been lost to our Order entirely through the careless and ignorant rendering of our Ritual and its accompanying ceremonial. Such cases have come within our own experience. Dr. OLIVER remarks on this: — "the assidious Mason aims at the progressive improvement of his mental faculties, and if his hopes are disappointed and knowledge proves to be an unattainable phantom he retires in disgust, and pronounces Masonry to be nothing better than a useless waste of time. His labour is in vain; he seeks for improvement and finds it not; who can then wonder that he should quit the vapid scene and employ his energies in other pursuits which afford a more gratifying and beneficial return."*

W.M.—I can well understand the case as you put it, Brother Preceptor, and I know of one particular instance in which an Initiation ceremony was so conducted that the Brother who received it declared that he would not again attend the Lodge, nor has he done so, although fifteen years have since elapsed. He lives still in high position and repute, but is lost to our Order as though he had never entered it.

P.M.—I could multiply such instances. There can be no doubt that first impressions are of vital consequence to the candidate, and that it greatly depends on what these may be whether or not he becomes a worthy and useful member of our Society or a careless and indifferent sharer

* *Oliver's* "Landmarks. † *Oliver's* "Jurisprudence."

in its work, with greater regard for the pleasure associated with the hours of refreshment than for the duties which membership imposes on him.

Pre.—Alluding to "first impressions," How, in his Manual, says—"As it generally happens that first impressions are too powerful to be obliterated by time or circumstance, it is of vital importance that the most reverential attention be paid by every Brother in the Lodge during the ceremony of Initiation; no one, therefore, ought to preside who has not a clear enunciation and ready and reverential delivery."*

W.M.—But is not that expecting too much as a general rule? Men who could fulfil that condition literally are certainly few and far between.

Pre.—Granted; but something approaching such qualification could be reasonably expected from all who declare that by reason of their courteous manner, easy address, and skill in Freemasonry, they are fitted to teach as well as to rule and govern.† It is where those qualifications so essentially necessary in every candidate for the Master's Chair are taken for granted because the candidate declares that he can conscientiously undertake the management of the Lodge with such qualifications, that a great wrong is done to the Craft. How often do we find a Brother the least qualified in each of those respects placed, for reasons which cannot at all times be expressed but which are certainly not Masonic, in the highest office it is in the power of the Lodge to bestow? And this, too, when it is well known that courteous manner is wanting, address is

* *How's* "Freemason's Manual."

† "In the Master of a Lodge some degree of eloquence is necessary, to enable him to explain symbols, to illustrate allegories, and instruct the Brethren in the general principles of Masonry, as well as to perform the routine business of the Lodge."—*Oliver.*

uneasy, and skill nowhere. It seems hard to say it, does it not? But is not this a fact?

P.M.—No doubt it is; but in what manner could a remedy be applied? Circumstances must govern cases in a variety of instances, and regulations be sometimes sacrificed to expediency.

Pre.—They never should be to the extent of placing any one in the position of Master who is unmistakeably incompetent. "The progress through the several offices," as it is termed, is not in itself a qualification. "Promotion shall be by merit" we are told, and but little merit can attach to anyone who, having had the abundant opportunity which the holding of subordinate offices would afford him has not acquired those qualifications which are essentially necessary. No, there can be no excuse for placing the ignorant in the position of the teacher, or the rude and abrupt in that of the refined and courteous.* We should be strong on that point, and the approval by the Board of Installed Masters should be a *sine qua non* before Installation, and not as it now generally is, a mere figure of speech.

S.W.—It is the practice in our Lodge for those who accept Office as Wardens to submit themselves during their period of Wardenship to a Committee of P.M's. for proof of qualification for the Office of W.M., and I have personal and practical knowledge of the benefits connected with such practice.

Pre.—It would be well if all Lodges did the same. If it were an established rule that examination would be required before candidature were permitted rely upon it the work of Freemasonry would be better discharged by all. Officers would vie with each other in respect of punctuality,

* "Is the Master of a Lodge beloved by the Brethren? You may be sure he is a just, and clever, and amiable man."—*Oliver*.

quality of work, and earnestness in all matters of detail; and an enthusiasm would be evoked which would influence the whole body of Members with a result to the Lodge which may be imagined, but which, alas! is not now frequently experienced. Much more might be said in regard to this, but we will now proceed to another subject relating to the Importance of the Initiatory Ceremoy. One of the Masonic Authors (I think STONE, but at the moment cannot call to mind in what work of his) says: "Everything in this degree is adapted to impress upon the mind of the Candidate the necessity of maintaining purity of life and conduct in order to ensure a happy immortality." Therefore it is above all things necessary that the utmost care should be taken to observe a solemn and reverential conduct of the whole proceedings, avoiding the slightest tendency to levity or to the performance of any action which might tend to divert the mind of the Candidate from any portion of the Ceremonial. Quietude and strict order will best enable him, as well in his darkened condition as after illumination, to reflect on every particular of what is said and done, and thereby secure that impression on his mind which shall indelibly fix on his memory the moral teachings he receives on what to him will ever be a memorable event in his life. Too much stress cannot be laid on this necessity if we would do unto others that we would have done by us under like circumstances. What we would not do in a place of worship we should carefully avoid doing in a place dedicated to T.G.A.O.T.U., and consequently vulgar noise or irrelevant language should be far from the portals of the Lodge at all times. Brother Student, tell me, when you were about to be "admitted," what first struck your attention?

Stu.—Sounds which I had never previously heard, and which I then thought of a very distinct character. I

remember your mention of this introduction at one of our former interviews, and a reference to the exhortation to which those sounds allude.* Of course at that time I had no knowledge of such allusion, but on attending a Lodge of Instruction shortly after, it was explained to me.

Pre.—With what result?

Stu.—I thought it very forcible and appropriate. The words have never left my mind, and I frequently reflect upon the impolicy of lessening their impression which the practice of using those sounds unnecessarily, and without the same application, certainly involves.

Pre.—The same observation is frequently made by those who look for, and expect to find but do not find, consistency in all Masonic procedure. At the time of your admission you could not of course know what followed on those sounds. But since then opportunities have been afforded you. What did the proper Officer announce on hearing those sounds?

Stu.—A report!

Pre.—He should I think have said *Alarm*, although in the *published* Emulation working, 1871 (said to be *published by authority*, which I don't believe) the word Report is given. Let us consider why, and first refer to the dictionary definition of the respective words. Report:—To return as sound; to give back. Alarm:—Any sound, outcry or information intended to give notice of approaching danger. Secondly, MACKEY defines Alarm as "The signal of the approach of a person (stranger) demanding admission to the Lodge;"† and thirdly, we have our Sectional instruction that our Ancient Brethren met on high hills and low vales,

* Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.—*Matt.* vii. 7. (Note, the Masonic text varies.)

† *Mackey's* Lexicon.

&c., "the better to observe all who might ascend or descend, lest a stranger should approach, the Tyler might give timely notice to the Master, &c., &c."* On all these grounds, therefore and because, in addition, that it should be known that intimation is sought to be conveyed of the approach of a Candidate; and not of a member or visitor merely, the word Alarm appears to me to be the more correct. In the case of other than the Candidate seeking admission a less important sound suffices, and that can be given back as a report if necessary. Do you agree with this, Brother P.M.?

P.M.—I do. In fact, though it is not the general practice, I know of many Lodges where the word Alarm is used, and in these I have never heard the whispered enquiry "Is it the Candidate?" the intimation being such as can with certainty be well understood in the S., and instant communication is made to the E., with the accompaniment of the like sounds.

Pre.—What followed?

P.M.—A direction to "*Enquire* who *wants*."

Pre.—And then?

P.M.—The J.W. being required to retain his *constant* place directed his Assistant to "*see* who *seeks*."

Pre.—Small points of detail, some may say; but attention to minutiæ is essential to perfection, and, therefore, should not be disregarded;

"It is the little rift within the lute,
That by-and-bye makes all the music mute."

Brother Student, what direction was given to the Candidate between announcement and admission?

Stu.—In my case I was desired to *Halt;* but as at the moment both my conductor and myself were not in forward motion, the command was not altogether intelligible. When

* First Lecture, Sixth Section.

subsequently assisting to work the Sections I found it expressed thus: "He desired me to *wait*," and I certainly think "wait" the most appropriate word to be used in the circumstance referred to. But, Brother Preceptor, have you not left out some portion of the examination at the door of the Lodge?

Pre.—Purposely. I shall not say more to you than may without impropriety be heard or read by any stranger to our mysteries. I quote words which are familiar to me though I cannot remember to whom they are to be attributed:—"I should say much more if I were not afraid of being heard by those who are uninitiated, because men are apt to deride what they do not understand, and the ignorant not being aware of the weakness of their minds, condemn what they ought most to venerate." With this I agree, and therefore propose to pass over all those portions of Ritual which do not involve any matters about which there has been, is, or may be any dispute or controversy. Whatever is wanting in continuation of the entire ceremony we are now engaged upon can be supplied in the proper place for instruction, or within the precincts of the Lodge itself. From what position should the announcement of approach, &c., be repeated.

Stu.—From the left of S.W., by I.G.

Pre.—Yes, in the position which should be taken for all salutes on entrance to or departure from the Lodge. And these salutes should be perfect, and not performed in the very slovenly and perfunctory manner we so frequently have occasion to observe. There is a depth of meaning in the salutation altogether beyond the act of respect to the W.M. and the Lodge which is intended thereby. A conscientious Mason then and there renews, in an important sense, his obligation, and says in effect "That secrecy which I have bound myself to keep I will still maintain;

receive me to participate in the work, and on my leaving you accept assurance that your confidence shall not be betrayed."

P.M.—In some Lodges of Instruction I have of late noticed an endeavour to perfect the Brethren in this necessary token of respect, and proof of acquaintance with the signs of the respective degrees, by what has been called "entry drill." The Lodge being "called off" for a short interval such Members present as may desire to be instructed are "drilled" by the Preceptor or other qualified Brother after the manner in which soldiers are first taught their marching and extension movements, the several motions being directed by numbers, of which there are seven to each degree. This requires personal inspection to be understood, and the instruction cannot otherwise be communicated. I may say that what I have seen is to be commended, and that many who have practiced in this drill have gained great confidence in "proving" thereby.

Pre.—I like the idea, and believe it might be made of great use in many ways. W.M., after you have been informed how the Candidate hopes to obtain certain privileges, what enquiry do you make?

W.M.—If the speaker can vouch that Mr.——— *is* (not *comes*) properly prepared; and this is always answered at once in the affirmative.

Pre.—But not always correctly, which is to be deplored; for the proper preparation is highly symbolical, and neglect on the part of the two Officers concerned in the preparation, and particularly of him who vouches, renders much of what will hereafter be conveyed to the mind of the Candidate erroneous and ridiculous. Many P.M's. can tell of the substitution of right for left and *vice versa* in Lodges wherein they have been visitors and in consequence

diffident in suggesting correction of mistakes. I fear that if a great majority of those whose position is "within the entrance" were asked by the W.M. to follow up the reply they so confidently make by describing the "mode, &c.," they would be unable to comply with the request. I would ask you now W.M. how you have been accustomed to conclude your direction for admission?

W.M.—"In due form Brother Deacons?"

Pre.—Permit me here to remark that there is no occasion to use the two last words. In the first place if you do it sounds as though you directed certain officers to perform an act which is not within the scope of their duty, but which is the absolute duty of the Officer you address. In the second place Deacons who are worth anything are ready to "take charge" without being called to attention. I hope you won't think me hypercritical but, as I have already said, apparently small matters should be considered if we seek to produce a homogeneous whole.

W.M.—On the contrary, I thank you. I can only make the stereotyped remark that "I was taught so," and never having really thought much about the effect should probably have continued to repeat what I now notice should be avoided.

P.M.—The "admission" which follows this direction, Brother Preceptor, is everywhere practised in the same manner, is it not?

Pre.—My personal experience would lead me to say yes, but I have heard of some departure from what might be considered the general practice. A correspondent tells me that in some Lodges an invocation by the Admitting Officer grates offensively on the ears of many who object to the too frequent use of the name of the Deity. He is powerless to prevent it, although he does not scruple, whenever the occasion is given, to protest against any addition to that

which is most customary amongst us. For reasons already given I cannot further allude to this matter, but must leave you to your own imaginings. I can now pass over that portion of our ceremony which comprises the supplication of the W.M. (or Chaplain) to the question that follows, for the purpose of remarking that the required reply is one that should never be prompted. The enquiry itself leads up to the expected answer and, following on the solemn appeal which has preceded it, a short pause would, in the great majority of instances, ensure a satisfactory and indeed the only and proper admission. If not then forthcoming the enquiry should be repeated *with much emphasis*, and the reply awaited. Without a spontaneous acknowledgement there is no evidence of that deep-seated reverence and dependence which alone fits a candidate for admission to our Order. A prompted reply is worthless in this instance.

W.M.—And yet I have noticed the eagerness with which such prompting is proffered.

Pre.—Doubtless from want of consideration, and not from any desire to detract from the importance of both question and answer. It is an error easily corrected; let us hope that it may be so. How does the W.M. commence his next address?

P.M.—I have heard some say "Right! glad am I," others, "Right! glad are we," and again others, "Right-glad are we." Which do you think correct?

Pre.—"RIGHT-GLAD," which is a compound Anglo-Saxon word expressive of great pleasure; and "are *we*" because the Master speaks in the name of the whole of the Brethren, by whom the candidate has been accepted, and not in his individual capacity, he being at that time the exponent of the ceremony. A very little consideration will prove the incorrectness of the first-named modes of expression. To

tell a fellow-creature that he is right in professing that which is universally admitted savours of presumption, and admits a possibility of doubt where none can exist, and in which no human judgment is required. On the completion of this address what follows?

Stu.—The W.M.'s call to take notice.

Pre.—Before that call is made all should be seated, the strictest silence should be observed, no gavel should be sounded, and the call should be on all brethren *from* the four points of the compass.

W.M.—Why no gavel?

Pre.—Where is the need for it? It serves no purpose. All present are or should be strictly attentive. Then why disturb existing order by sound which has no meaning and tends chiefly to distract the mind of one who is intent on all he hears, with one faculty stimulated by temporary deprivation of another. Consider what has just passed, and the assurance given that no danger need be feared, and then reflect what sharp and sudden, not to say as others say "vulgar," noise may do to weaken impressions which it should be our chiefest desire should be retained without diminution. If any reason could be advanced for such disturbance of course consideration might be given to it, however slight such reason might be; but there is absolutely none, and consequently the practice is entirely objectionable.

W.M.—What you say is worth attention; I note that you said Brethren *from* and not *in*, as I have been accustomed to say. Why?

Pre—It is supposed that the Initiate is making his entry into Freemasonry in the presence of the universal body of Freemasons; and, as far as possible, it is sought to be impressed on his mind that at that moment a vast assembly is called from all directions to observe what is

being done on his behalf. He cannot judge by existing evidence of the number around him, and the call is so framed that imagination may extend without limit. So also with the perambulation which follows, for he "who walks in darkness seeking for light," mentally extends the distance he travels, and Initiates properly led may, and indeed most often do, believe they traverse many passages or courts during their brief journey in charge of the Deacons. I could say more on this subject but for reasons you are well aware of, and would condemn in open language any departure from the solemnity of the moment by the practice of the senseless "battery," a name given to a form of working highly thought of in many country Lodges as "great fun." Having witnessed this departure from all authority, this total disregard of the high and lofty purpose of the Initiation ceremony, it is difficult to restrain one's desire to speak out; but to do so would involve a risk of betrayal of secrets no true Mason should incur. If you can understand me by the statement that perambulation is extended to thrice instead of once, and that from E., S., and W., the gavel is abused in an increasing vehemence as the Candidate passes along I may say as much, and leave you to work out the delightful (?) practice according to your own imaginings. One thing is certain, you cannot possibly imagine anything more totally devoid of all sense or meaning, or more opposed to the principle of Order. My friends the "Buffs," with whose esoteric practices I am acquainted, could not, with all the desire in the world, have invented anything more out of character with our solemnities; and as their *forte* is the parodying of much that we reverence my wonder is they have not added this particular noise to the several with which their amusing "rites" are accompanied.

Stu.—You have quite correctly expressed the belief I

entertained as to distance when I was taken to the J.W. from the W., the Brother who had me in his charge being very deliberate in his manner of progress. You mentioned Deacons, were there two in attendance?

Pre.—There should have been. The Junior leading and instructing throughout the first ceremony. After you had heard the same examination by the J.W. that you had heard at the door of the Lodge what transpired?

Stu.—I was directed to "Enter *Free*."

Pre.—That is correct. In comparing printed Rituals it will be found that the compilers of several have not rightly understood what is here intended. In some the words are "Pass free and of good report,"* in others, "Enter free and of good report." Now *Pass* is altogether wrong. *Enter* is right, the ceremony being that of entering an apprentice. The J.W. gives force to the premier qualification (next to a belief in the Deity) for admission to Freemasonry, by emphasizing the word *Free*, leaving the S.W. to emphasize the second qualification, by the direction "Enter free and of *good report.*" This gives good effect to this portion of the ceremony. Whilst on this subject it may interest you to know that previous to a resolution of the Grand Lodge, holden on the 1st September, 1847, the customs and regulations of the Order required that every Candidate should be "a free man born of a free woman," and in the form of declaration he had to declare himself to be *free born;* but, for reasons submitted by the then Grand Master, it was on that date unanimously resolved that the phrase in future should be "free man," and the words free by birth should be cancelled.† In the working of the first section by the present Members of the Emulation Lodge of Instruction the original requirement

* Emulation Working, 1871.

† *Oliver's* "Masonic Jurisprudence."

is stated, and subsequently qualified by a reference to the resolution of 1847.

S. W.—On the presentation of Candidate from the W. after preliminary examination what sign should the S.W. adopt?

Pre.—That of fidelity. And in all degrees it should be observed that, until after communication to the Candidate of certain information by the W.M., the sign of fidelity should alone be used in presentations.

W.M.—Do the questions which follow presentation in this degree vary in Lodges?

Pre.—Not in any important particular. Even the published Rituals are more nearly agreed as to these than to any other portions of the "work." I may, however, suggest the propriety of making the sentence "unbiassed by the improper solicitation of friends against your own inclination" continuous, and without the slightest pause after the word "friends." Otherwise, and it is frequently to be heard, the reply is made to express a positive contradiction, and a ridiculous *non sequitur*. Don't slight this as a mere trifling matter because perhaps it has not come within your experience to have heard it. Critics surround every W.M. when at work, and it is well that, as a general rule, their comments are not known to him who offends the rules of more than one of the seven liberal arts and sciences he is supposed to have studied. Again, do not say "*once* admitted" as many do. Admission into the Order is first and final, and this word is surplusage.

W.M.—When direction is given for the advance how should it be expressed?

Pre.—In this degree "to the pedestal in due form." The Emulation Working, 1871,—I quote from what is stated to be an authorised publication; as also from "the only copyright perfected Ritual acknowledged by the Craft" which I very much query,—has it by the *proper steps*. It

has been argued that as the advance is irregular the word proper is not appropriate. In one published Ritual, not either of those I have just referred to, it gives the following as an explanation by the W.M. "On your advancement from West to East you advance by three irregular steps; irregular by reason of the situation you were then in, not knowing where you were then going; but they allude to three more regular steps; namely right lines and angles, morally teaching us upright lives and well squared actions." There, if you can make head or tail of that *explanation* it is more than I can! Irregularity *alludes* to regularity! Does it? One would think otherwise. And this is just the sort of nonsense which many of these so-called "Rituals" put into the heads of our younger Members as enabling them to become *bright* Masons. How easy it is to discover a *book* Mason from a bright one! Perhaps we ought to be thankful it is so, for it makes it the more easy to detect impostors when they present themselves as they sometimes, to their discomfiture, venture to do. But to resume; MACKEY says these steps are emblematical of the stages of human life—"youth, manhood and old age." He says no more, and that to my mind is hardly sufficiently explicit. However, be the meaning what it may, the J.D. should see that the Candidate takes no more than the prescribed number, judging the distance to be traversed, and confidently placing and directing the Candidate accordingly. In some Lodges of Instruction you may learn how this can be done without shuffling or ungainly posturing. I cannot here enter into further particulars. If you like to have anything to do with the books I refer to you will find they are not so reticent.

W.M.—In the address which follows the advance there is not, I believe, any great difference of expression in the several Lodges?

Pre.—What slight divergencies there are can be attributed to the published so-called "perfect" and "accepted" Rituals. One would say "freedom of inclination *in* every Candidate" is preferable to "freedom of inclination *from*, &c.;" also that after remarking that Freemasonry "possesses many great and invaluable privileges" the conjunction *and*, in the sense of connection, before the words "in order to secure those privileges," is far better than the conjunction *but*, in the sense of exception, which is certainly not intended. When you hear such solecisms you may rely that he who utters them has some knowledge of the publications I speak of, and has not received his Masonic education from an intelligent source.

P.M.—I think we must say "agreed" to this! The direction that follows this address and the consequent action in compliance therewith are so well known to us that probably you will have no occasion to remark thereon.

Pre.—Only that the Deacons should see the W.M.'s directions strictly complied with (non-compliance in some respects has come within my experience), and acting as supporters should cross their wands in a manner which you can readily understand. If the gavel is brought into use at all (in a well-governed Lodge there is not the slightest necessity that it should be), the sound should be given lightly, that the attention of the candidate might not be called away from the serious business of the moment. And now Brethren, with your permission we will give our Candidate an opportunity to reflect upon what has transpired up to this point, and to search out the "hidden mysteries which our symbols and our teaching are so well calculated to unfold." At our next meeting we will remark on the O.B. and continue the ceremony.

Chip 5.

PRECEPTOR, P.M., W.M., S. & J. WARDENS, TREASURER, SECRETARY & STUDENT.

Remarks on the O.B—The Warrant of the Lodge—Disregard of its importance in some instances—HELE; its derivation and pronunciation—Tides: their ebb and flow—The O.B., that of a FREEMASON *and not of an Entered Apprentice—LIGHT the first demand—Certain practices condemned—"Duly" not "newly"—The lesser lights—The Columns and their connection with the Lodge supports—The* CABLE-TOW *explained — The Secrets of a Freemason — The Wardens' examination — Porchway entrance — Separate Initiation — Labour and refreshment.*

Pre.—

AGAIN, BRETHREN, I have the pleasure to greet you. At our last meeting we had placed the candidate in position. We will take up our work from that point.

W.M.—Shall I repeat that important portion of the work which now devolves upon the Master?

Pre.—It is hardly necessary to do so in this company. The general terms should be fixed in the minds of every working brother by the frequency of repetition in his hearing. Like all ritual it is better retained in the

memory by being so learnt than by any possible book study. We will strive to understand one another by suggestions in respect of such portions of our ceremonial as we would consider it improper to make generally known. Every Mason must admit the impropriety of publishing *in extenso* the important portion you refer to, and the fact that it is to be found in certain works does not afford to my mind any justification for further publicity. Let those who please seek for the information from sources which will surely mislead them, for even in this the published rituals agree to differ. On one or two points connected with this portion a few remarks may, however, be made. For instance, "Worthy and Worshipful" are the words used in some Lodges. In others, "Worthy, Worshipful, and Warranted," which mode of expression I most favour, because it appears to have been a design of those who compiled our ritual to make use of triplets wherever consistent with the work, in this degree especially. So we have "Ancient, Free and Accepted;" "held, assembled and dedicated;" "HELE, conceal, reveal;" "trial, examination, information;" "just, perfect, regular;" "letter, character, figure;" "evasion, equivocation, reservation," and so on. I have named these triads in regular sequence as they occur, omitting only certain words which you can easily supply. Again, I hold that, in this degree particularly, the word "warranted" is necessary as an assurance that the introduction into Freemasonry is made with due warrant and authority, it being recognised that "no assemblage of Masons can be legally congregated for work as a Lodge except under the authority of a Warrant of Constitution granted by some Grand Lodge."* It has been questioned whether or not the business performed in a Lodge without the actual presence of the Warrant is according to Masonic

* *Mackey's* Lexicon.

Law. As nothing contained in our "regulations and constitutions" refers to the Warrant as other than an authority granted to the Master of the Lodge for the time being, it may be fairly presumed that whilst the work is under his direction the production of his authority is not absolutely necessary to legalize the proceedings, although doubtless it is the better plan that it should be at hand at all such times. It is admitted to be *right* that a newly-entered Freemason should know the nature of the authority by which he becomes subject to certain conditions of entry and membership; and on the occasion of transfer from one Master to his successor, it must be produced. It is a different matter when the work of the Lodge is governed by a substitute in the absence of the *de facto* Master, for then the Acting Ruler's authority might reasonably be questioned unless the evidence of deputed authority were producible; so that I am inclined to think when the actual Master is present the work of the Lodge cannot be questioned on the score of illegality, even though the Warrant is not in the Lodge.

P.M.—Ought not the Warrant to be at all times in the actual possession of the Brother to whom it has been entrusted?

Pre.—I think so. It is transferred as a sacred deposit and the holder is charged to consider it as such, and to keep it, not only in a material sense but figuratively, pure and unsullied, and so to transmit it to his successor. If he permits himself to be dispossessed of his muniment of authority, even for the purpose of placing the same on the walls of the customary place of meeting, he risks the loss or injury of that which is regarded as a document "upon which the very existence of the Lodge depends." And, yet, what instances of careless disregard of that important Diploma could be multiplied by the Secretaries of our

Lodges. "To what base uses" have I not seen it sometimes put. "Imagination" may "trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung hole," but imagination is out-imagined by the use of a W.M.'s warrant as a wedge to steady a banquet table on the night of Installation;* who would think—

The Lodge's warrant, crushed and cast away,
Might fill a gap the table top to stay?

W.M.—Then you do not approve of the practice of framing and suspending the Charter in the Lodge room?

Pre.—As a general principle I think the Warrant of Constitution should not be so placed. There may be, for all I know, exceptional circumstances connected with some Lodges which might lessen the objection to such an important document being out of the immediate control of the person who has been charged with its safe custody and careful preservation; but I know of none which can justify its use as an item of wall furniture, or take away from each successive Master the right or power to retain it in his own charge.

P.M.—I have been so accustomed to see the Charter of the Lodge to which I belong on the walls of our place of meeting that I cannot readily agree with your remarks as otherwise I might.

Pre.—I don't ask it. Many like yourself will not readily change what has been customary with them, and their opinions are entitled to respect equally with mine;

"'Tis with our judgment, as our watches, none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own."

And so what has been will, I dare say, in this matter be still continued; but continuance without better reason than those given for discontinuance will not prove me in error. But let us turn back to another portion of the O.B. and note

* A fact.

the word HELE, in respect of which, much too frequently, the true meaning and mode of pronunciation is as little understood by the giver as by the receiver. When you first heard the word Brother Student what sound had it, and what meaning did you attach to it?

Stu.—I thought the word to be *heal*,* and should have always spelt it so but for better information when I enquired what context it bore to the subsequent sentences, for I could make nothing of it at the time I first repeated it.

W.M.—I always pronounce it *hail*,† although, of course, I know the meaning of that word does not apply in any sense to the engagement then being entered into; but I am told that either that or *hale*,‡ which again has no better application, supplies the sound, or proper pronunciation to be observed.

Pre.—"HELE" is derived from an old Saxon word "Helan;" it is correctly spelt, but is pronounced *hale*, the *e* in Anglo-Saxon having the same sound as *a* in the word *fate*. It signifies *to hide*, and thus you will note its applicability in this part of our ritual. It is to a considerable extent obsolete but not altogether so, for in the western parts of England, at this very day, to *hele* over anything signifies among the common people to cover it, and he that covereth a house with tile or slate is called a hellier.§ I forget where or when, but I have read that the preservation of this Saxon word in the Masonic dialect, while it has ceased to exist in the vernacular, is a striking proof of the antiquity of the Order, and its Ceremonies in England. If only for this reason it seems a pity that continued mis-pronunciation should be persisted in. It is ridiculous to contend that

* Heal—to cure, mend, repair, &c.

† Hail—a term of salutation, to call, greet, salute, &c.

‡ Hale—Healthy, sound, robust, &c.

§ *King's* "Critical History of the Apostles Creed,"—p. 178.

because the mis-pronunciation "rhymes with the two succeeding words," and the "meaning can always be subsequently conveyed to the enquirer," the confusion of ideas in the mind of the novitiate should be perpetuated. Will you kindly reflect on this?

W.M.—Most certainly. It is quite as easy to use the one word as the other, and there can be no doubt as to the advisability of retaining what is so evidently a proof of antiquity in the construction of our ritual. I would like to ask you which are the proper words to be used as we proceed, "sure information" or "full conviction?"

Pre.—A quarter of a century ago, in London working, the words "sure information from some well known Brother," were, as far as I can remember, invariably used, but of late years *the books* have amongst them quite mixed up the correct phraseology. In some will be found the last five words omitted, in others the words "full conviction" substituted for the entire seven. The original expression is certainly to be preferred, for it guards the newly made Brother from the exercise of an immature judgment in the matter of "proof." If you will connect these remarks with the portion of ritual to which we are referring, you will quite understand my meaning.

W.M.—It is plain to me without further elucidation. Here is another point; some Masters say: "So that our secret art and hidden mysteries," others "lest our secret art and hidden mysteries;" and others again "hidden art and secret mysteries." Why this difference?

Pre.—Because some do not reflect on what they utter. The "mixture" is a result of an attempt to improve (?) upon the original composition. Let us first consider the difference of meaning between "*So that* our" and "*Lest* our." *So*, an adverb, which according to its use has a variety of definitions, in this instance is equivalent to the

words "in such a manner." *Lest* is a conjunction with but one definition "for fear that." The promise is that something shall not be done either "in such a manner," or "for fear that" some other thing may improperly become known through the unworthy action. Now as to which of these expressions is the best, for they are nearly equal in value, and both good grammar, opinions may reasonably differ. "Quot homines, tot sententiæ." My leaning is to the first named "So that, &c.," as more euphonious and better to be understood by the novitiate. "Secret art and hidden mysteries" certainly, and notwithstanding the authority of the printed ritual which professes to publish only what is "taught in Union Emulation's Lodge of Improvement." There is reason in speaking of our Masonic Art as a secret one, and our mysteries as hidden within its practice, but none that I can see in describing the Art as hidden. So (in such manner) I contend that "*So* that our secret Art and hidden mysteries may improperly become known through my unworthiness" is correct ritual.

P.M.—A little beyond this portion we have a reference to the "tide," and as a general rule I hear it said "the tide regularly ebbs and flows." To this exception has been taken as far as regards the word *regularly*.

Pre.—Rightly so I think. In some old rituals the expression used is "twice in the natural day," which is certainly better than that you refer to, which conveys an error, for it is hardly necessary to tell intelligent men like yourselves that "tide" means the ebb and the flow of the ocean and seas "twice in a *little more* than twenty-four hours," so that, there being some amount of irregularity, and the full meaning of the sentence not being lessened by its omission, the word *regular* is to my mind better left out. But to proceed; with what words, Brother Student, did the W.M. close his prompting?

Stu.—"Of a Freemason." In other Lodges I have heard "of an E.A. Freemason."

Pre.—Your W.M. was right. I am not sure whether or not I called your attention to the distinction between "F.M." and "E.A.F." in the opening Ceremony. Even if so, here is the proper place to point out emphatically that the pledge of the Initiate is the binding assurance of a Freemason without reference to any subsequent proceedings or individual progress whatsoever. If the newly entered brother never again set foot within a Masonic Lodge, or cared to learn more of the Institution, he has nevertheless been "made a Freemason," and as such is entitled to certain privileges attached to Membership, such privileges being capable of further extension according to progress. The force of this argument alone renders unnecessary any allusion to the analogous position of those who enter, say the Army as soldiers, the Navy as sailors, &c., without reference to rank in either service; degrees in Freemasonry being but the outcome of progress in the practice of the Art. In regard to which I shall have more to say when we "clothe" our cadet. After what you had repeated had been made binding the W.M. made an enquiry, Brother Student. Of what nature?

Stu.—He desired to know my wish under the circumstances of my then present condition?

Pre.—Book learners vary this enquiry according to the published rituals they respectively select for their guidance. In some the expression used is "present situation," in some "at the present moment." "Present condition" is the more appropriate for it especially refers to that state (or condition) in which you had been kept for a considerable time, and which typified the condition of ignorance in which you awaited the revelation of Masonic Light and Instruction. No other words could be more consistent

with the intended effect "that your heart might conceive" before discovery, or so forcibly lead up to the reply you made. When your request was complied with what were the accompaniments?

Stu.—A sharp and sudden sound which startled and confused me, obliterating at once the deep impression which the previous solemnity had made on my mind, and for the continued practice of which, for I have often heard it since, I have never been able to discover a sufficient reason.

Pre.—There is none. It is a senseless practice and antagonistic to that peace and quietude which should accompany our ceremonies throughout. DR. OLIVER writing on the subject of the first revelation made to the Candidate, says: "Light is the first *demand* of a Candidate at his initiation, and the natural light is succeeded by an intellectual illumination which serves to enlighten his path on his journey from this world to the next." And yet in how many Lodges (not in all) is this grand and sublime moment chosen for the display of force and surprise in one form or another. In some places by the violent use of the gavels and the accompanying action of those present; in others by the exhibition of things "offensive and defensive" in a threatening and, to a nervous person, a certainly most alarming manner. None of this is in accord with any of our Landmarks, to say nothing of its being absolutely contradictory of our assurances that "no danger should be feared," or anything be "permitted in the Lodge to disturb its harmony." You may, if you have not had similar experience, think I am romancing, but unfortunately it is too true that such practices in certain of our Lodges call for animadversion, and should be the subject for enquiry and of the exercise of authority to prevent our beautiful and most righteous

ceremonies becoming mere mummeries and child's play. I must not tell you all I know, but of this be sure, that if I could, and you heard me, you would agree with me that if purity of ritual is worthy of preservation the time has arrived, aye, and arrived long since, when some measures should be taken to control the exuberance of some and the ignorant introductions by others into what we denominate our "pure and unsullied system." If these remarks go beyond yourselves let it be understood that I could say more if I would without in any way infringing on what my engagements regard as the secrets of Masonry, "her signs, words, and tokens, and no more." "Let the galled jade wince." The practices I allude to have no more to do with pure and Ancient Freemasonry than any outrageous performances beyond the orthodox formulary of any religious sect have to do with Religion. It is in consequence of them, however, that in frequent instances men of education and intelligence have their sense of propriety offended and give up their connection with the Order, whilst others have reasons afforded them for allegations outside the circle of the Fraternity detrimental to the Institution.

P.M.—What do you consider should be done at the time we are speaking of?

Pre.—Simply nothing. A staid and solemn silence for a few moments would be far more impressive than any interruption whatever, except, perhaps, in lodges wherein effective music can be secured. Then, as I have noticed, the instrumental or vocal, or sometimes instrumental and vocal, performance of a chant, (and there are several appropriate,) has a good effect. In one Lodge I have visited the hour of the meridian is sounded solemnly and distinctly by a clock especially constructed for that purpose; and here the mind of the candidate receives an impression never to be forgotten in connection with the

enquiry, "*When* were you made, &c.?" There is reason in either of these practices, but assuredly not in those we have previously considered. After the "GREAT LIGHTS" had been pointed out to you, Brother Student, what were you assisted to do, and with what directions?

Stu.—To rise as a newly——

Pre—Stay; that should have been *duly*. Again I have to remark on the diversity of book instruction, as well as on the many differences of opinion in respect of this apparently, but not really, trivial variation held amongst Preceptors of the present day. The Initiate has been entered into the Order by the "due form observed in making a Mason" to quote the very words of the ritual which all acknowledge. The expression *duly* testifies to the fact that all proceedings have been in due order, and it is expedient that assurance should be given as to that. Consequently I think *duly* is the correct word.

W.M.—I have heard it said,* "The word is addressed in each case to one who has just previously contracted a *new* obligation, and who, in that particular respect, is distinguished from the other Brethren around him. It admits him for the first time to an equality with those others; he is a new brother in that degree. On the other hand, the word *duly* appears to be somewhat of a redundancy. One has a right to assume that where a fresh obligation is imposed on a candidate it is *duly* done—that is, in the manner prescribed by law or usage."

P.M.—I hardly think that sufficient as an argument in favour of *newly* as against *duly*, which latter word certainly gives greater emphasis to the entire expression, and moreover is, as our Brother Preceptor puts it, a statement of fact important to the recipient, which the former is not in any particular.

* "Uniformity of Masonic ritual and observance,"—p. 108.

S.W.—In the sections we have the enquiry as to the making of a Mason, and the reply is in the words, "in due form," which due form is forthwith explained. Therefore I should consider *duly* the proper expression to be used by the W.M. when directing the candidate to rise.

Pre.—There are those who think it material that there should be but one mode of expression, and I am of them. Others are not so particular, and as to this point, it is hardly worth while to argue further. We will *duly* proceed to other matters. Let the lesser lights now engage our attention. First, as to their situation and the manner of describing same. We will first hear what our Brother Student understood when their situation was first pointed out to him.

Stu.—I was told they were situated E., S. and W., and the W.M., making no reference by action, proceeded to say they respectively represented the Sun, the Moon, and the Master of the Lodge. The Sun to rule the day, the Moon to govern the night, and the Master to rule and direct his Lodge. This resulted in a confusion of ideas which, following the order observed in naming them, placed the Master in the W., which I saw could not be intended.

J.W.—A similar result followed in my case, and until acquaintance with the section in which fuller explantion of these lesser lights is given I could not be satisfied as to the explanation.

Pre.—A simple operation on the part of the Master would prevent this confusion in the mind of the Initiate. It is necessary that these lights should be mentioned in the order of E., S., and W., for the further explanation our Bro. J.W. refers to is that the Sun rises in the E., gains its full meridian and lustre in the S., and sets in the West; and the Master is put in comparison with those two grand

luminaries, the Sun and Moon, for further reasons given in our Sections. The J.W. represents the Sun at its meridian; the S.W. represents the Moon (or the after-setting of the Sun); and the Master, by a very slight action, might so point out the respective positions of each as to prevent any possibility of misunderstanding by him to whom the information is afforded. Each of these three lesser lights is represented by a column, and it does not appear to be *generally* understood how these should be placed. In some Lodges curious observers may sometimes notice the Corinthian column placed in the E., and if they desire a reason, may be told, "Because it is the tallest and the most handsome." There you may be sure that no great research has been made into the meaning of our symbols, and that our allegorical illustrations are altogether lost upon the Brethren.

P.M.—It is true. You are not alone in noticing this disregard of proper arrangement. At times when the attention of principal Officers has been called to this disarrangement of emblems I have known the attempt to set right what is decidedly wrong met with the most careless indifference, and often with an expression of intention to continue the error no matter however much it was admitted to be against common sense.

Pre.—If the Brethren would but reflect on the many beautiful references made to these "lesser lights," as represented by the three columns, I feel sure they would not continue to disregard their proper disposition in the Lodge. Besides representing the ruler of the Lodge in comparison with the Grand Luminaries, which "dispense their blessings to mankind in general," they also respectively represent the great pillars which support the Lodge, viz. Wisdom, Strength and Beauty. The Ionic column, or pillar of Wisdom, is that of the W.M., whose business, it is

to exert his judgment and penetration in contriving the most proper and efficient means of completing the intended work of whatsoever nature it may be; and who is the humble representative of K.S., by whose marvellous wisdom the magnificent Temple of Jerusalem was built and dedicated to the service of T. G. A. O. T. U. The Doric column, or pillar of strength, is that of the S.W. who is required to support the authority of the W.M., to facilitate his designs and to see that his commands are carried into full and permanent effect; and who is the representative of H.K.T., whose strength in supplying men and materials so largely contributed to the success of the work undertaken by K.S. The Corinthian column, or pillar of beauty, is that of the J.W. who has it in his charge to adorn the work with all his powers of genius and active industry, to promote regularity amongst the Brethren by the sanction of his own good example, the persuasive eloquence of precept and a discriminative encouragement of merit. He also represents H.A.B. whose exquisite skill and masterly workmanship beautified and adorned King Solomon's Temple. It has ever been by the united energies of representatives of the three emblematical supporters of our Lodges that the entire system of Freemasonry has braved the shafts of envy and detraction, and in the words of an address well known to R.A. Masons "has had given to its Constitutions energy and permanency, thereby enabling them to survive the wreck of mighty empires and resist the destroying hand of time." With these beautiful references before us can it be said that "it is of no importance" how these columns are placed whilst we are at work?

P.M.—But is there no argument on the other side and in favour of the substitution of the Corinthian for the Ionic at the principal pedestal?

Pre.—As far as English Freemasonry is concerned I

know of none. In American Freemasonry it *may* be different. I have already quoted "MACKEY,"* whose Lexicon contains a mass of useful and valuable information, yet of whom it has been said some of his statements are erroneous or unsupported, and it is but fair that you should know what he says in respect of these columns. Speaking of wisdom he states; "It is represented by the Corinthian Column, and the W.M.; because the Corinthian Column wisely combines the strength without the massiveness of the Doric, as well as the grace, eloquence, and beauty of the Ionic." And then follows what I consider a non-sequitur "and *because* it is the duty of the W.M. to superintend, instruct and enlighten the craft by his superior wisdom." Referring to Strength, he says: "It is represented by the Doric and the S.W., because the Doric is the strongest and most massy of the Orders," and for other reasons similar to those I have already given. Of Beauty, he says: "It is represented by the Ionic Column and the J.W., because the Ionic was formed after the model of a beautiful young woman, and, because the situation of the J.W. in the S. enables him the better to observe that bright luminary which at its meridian height is the beauty of the day," which latter portion of the sentence appears to me very far-fetched indeed. However, you have now before you "the other side." For my part I cannot consider the American reasoning perfect, and prefer to take the account given in our own "Rise of the Orders," † wherein you find a description of these columns in the order of their invention. 1—The Doric; of which the two finest examples are those of the Parthenon at Athens, and the Theatre of Marcellus at Rome; 2—the Ionic; the best examples of which are from the Temple of Minerva Pollas at Athens, and the Temple of Fortuna Virilis at Rome; and

* An American Author. † 4th Section, 2nd Lecture.

3—the Corinthian; the beautiful capital of which is said to have been invented by *Calimachus* at Corinth, and the best examples of which are from the Stoa at Athens, and the Portico of the Parthenon at Rome. The Capital of the Corinthian Order has for two thousand years been acknowledged the greatest ornament of the Greek School of Architecture and, if only for that reason, is the most fitting to represent the Column of Beauty; and the Ionic, the second in the same school, prominent in the construction of the Temple of Minerva, the Goddess of Wisdom, is the most appropriate to symbolise the right use or exercise of knowledge, the choice of laudable ends, and of the best means to accomplish them. Brother Student, after these "Lesser Lights" had been explained to you an address followed. In that address reference is made to the "Cable-tow." Did you understand that expression?

Stu.—Yes, in its material sense. Subsequently, however, a promise made by me in another degree had reference to "the length of my Cable-tow" and as yet I have not gathered what may be the full meaning of the phrase.

Pre.—These have no direct connection the one with the other. That you saw you could readily and unmistakeably understand the use of. It was substantial and in evidence. But in the other case an emblem of very great importance was referred to. Look on the properly constructed tracing board of this degree. Surrounding it is a cord or cable tow, having four tassels, one placed at each of the four angles. These refer to the four cardinal virtues, viz., Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance and Justice. The Cable-tow is emblematic of the cord or bond of affection which should unite the whole Fraternity; "I drew them with cords of a man, with bonds of love."* So far as regards the emblem in connection with Universal

* Hosea xi. 4.

Freemasonry; but to the individual Freemason what is sought to be conveyed is, that no action of his life should be outside the boundaries enjoined by the four virtues enumerated, and that whilst he harmonises his conduct in accordance with those qualities he keeps within the length of his cable-tow.

P.M.—I must admit this explanation of the emblem has never before been known to me. I always thought the meaning of the phrase was no more than that one was not expected to travel beyond a reasonable distance to attend Masonic business; because the words appear to be connected only with the engagement to "answer and obey summonses."

Pre.—You omit four important words between "obey" and "summonses;" but without reference to those, it may be said that even in the respect of attendance to Masonic business a Member of the Order should be careful to assure himself that it is not imprudent to forego other matters of greater personal interest, or commit injustice to himself and family by compliance with the requests made to him. Hence the saving clause which follows:—"sickness, or the more pressing emergencies, &c.," *more pressing* having regard to the nature of "public or private avocations" being of greater consequence than Lodge business. But we are anticipating, and going far beyond what we arranged should have our first consideration. If the result of our interviews in the first degree should sufficiently interest you, we may be disposed to keep company as F.C.'s and M.M.'s. *Nous verrons*!

Stu.—I would ask here Brother Preceptor, whether the W.M. should complete the first portion of his address with the words, "as a man of honour and an *E.A.P.* &c., &c., *entrusted to you.*"

Pre.—I think not, in the first place, as I have before stated, the engagement has been that of a F.M., and in the

second that engagement referred to none but the secrets of Freemasonry. And, therefore, to give proper expression to what is meant, "as a man of honour and a F.M., that you would rather &c., of Freemasonry" is far more correct and forcible. And, follow me, as the W.M. proceeds it is because the engagement of a F.M. has been entered into that he is permitted to give information of the arrangement of degrees in the Order with reference to the fact that certain peculiarities attach to each which can be known only to those who merit such knowledge. And then he proceeds to entrust with just those peculiarities which are attached to the first of these several degrees, and shews the novitiate in what manner Freemasons are known to one another and distinguished from the rest of the world I may remark, in passing, that *by which to know* is more euphonious than *to know—by*. Now in what I am about to say let your memory and experience serve you towards understanding what I would say if "I was not afraid of being heard by those who are uninitiated," to requote words already used by me. It will surprise you to be informed that in some provincial Lodges the first act of introduction usually observed in "proof," differs from that to which Metropolitan Freemasons are accustomed; and in yet others has a further difference by the substitution of two actions for one, each with its separate signification. Consequently it is not only possible that doubt may be cast upon the *bonâ fides* of an unvouched for Visitor, but it is a fact that an instance of that sort has, and perhaps many such may have, arisen. I can go no further in the attempt to explain this most striking example of want of "unity" in working which it has been the aim of our predecessors to "maintain, uphold and practice throughout the Masonic world." And for similar reasons to those already given I can here say no more in reference to that in respect of

which "too much caution cannot be exercised* in communicating" except that the action itself is said to refer to a supposed custom among the inhabitants of Tyre, of punishing certain crimes by severance of the index finger from the hand at the point of junction; and that, for the sake of consistency, the introduction of the following words after "at length," viz: "as you are now about to receive it, or except in open Lodge when properly called upon," appears to be preferable to the contradictory practice of stating that a certain thing should *never* be said, and the speaker immediately breaking the rule he lays down. Carry this instruction into the preliminary examination in the second degree and you will see the force of it when demand is made of the Candidate in the S. and W., for then, unless such reservation has been made, the Candidate might justly refuse to obey the request of the Wardens.

W.M.—When the J.D. is called upon to dictate in the examination which now follows what answer should he give to the W.M.'s first enquiry?

Pre.—His answer should terminate with the words E.A.P., because although that which is in question is general in its application to all members of the Order, it is particularly so in relation to the preliminary stage of Masonic progress through which the Novitiate is now passing. I want to make it clear that up to the point when the permission to which the Master has alluded comes in force, whatever engagements there may have been entered into have been those of a Freemason, and that now, and only now, the progress through degrees is commenced in the character of an E.A.P. Do you follow me?

W.M.—Yes, but I suppose you will not find a perfect agreement to this?

* In some Lodges "observed."

Pre.—Not if what has been already experienced can be considered final; but there are doubtless many good working Masons who have not thought the matter out so closely, and who may probably see the force of our argument and be disposed to give it their support; in which case a great anomaly will have been cleared away, and the ritual be made all the more agreeable to common sense interpretation.

W.M.—In one of the answers in examination by W.M. and his Wardens the words occur, "but with you I will, &c." In some of our gatherings I receive correction and am required to say that what I will "I will . . with you." The meaning is pretty much the same; why should there be such distinction?

Pre.—I take it to be because the former mode of expression is more emphatic. It is as though one said "I have reason to know that you possess a right to make the demand and therefore I am more disposed to comply than I otherwise might be." The latter mode of expression is careless and indifferent as compared with the former, and particularly so if proper emphasis is given to the words, "*with you* I will, &c."

W.M.—And again, although troubling you about what may be considered very trifling, what is the proper description of the situation of the left hand pillar,—"in the Porchway entrance," "at the Porchway entrance," "at (or in) the Porchway *or* entrance?" I have heard in Lodges of Instruction these several expressions, and as neither has met with objection, have been at a loss to decide which to prefer.

Pre.—I can best answer this enquiry by using other words than my own. In* "Uniformity of Masonic work-

* "Uniformity of Masonic Ritual and Observance," p. 98.—*W. W. Morgan*, London.

ing," a writer on this subject says "As regards the second question, 'in the Porchway entrance,' or 'at the Porch or entrance,' the difference in the two versions is apparently of little importance—to the extent at least that the intended sense of the passage will remain, whichever is used. I incline, however, to use the former, for the reason that there were more entrances to the Temple than one, and the use of the expression 'in the Porchway entrance' makes it clear which of them was indicated. It also agrees with *Lightfoot's* version, as quoted by *Coppin* in his 'Handbook of Freemasonry,' that the pillars in question stood one on either side of the door or entrance, and *within* the Porch, not in front of it. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the terms 'Porch' and 'entrance' are not interchangeable in the sense in which the latter is commonly used. The 'Porch' was a part of the Temple proper; it was the same breadth as the rest of the building —that is, twenty cubits, or thirty feet, and was ten cubits or fifteen feet deep—that is, from front to rear. At its entrance it had a gate of brass, on either side of which stood the pillars in question—namely, one to the right, the other to the left. This gate would be the 'Porchway entrance,' while the Porch itself would be rather a portico, such as the philosophers in the olden days were in the habit of perambulating when engaged in inculcating to their disciples the points of their particular philosophy. Those of your readers who are interested in these discussions will do well to refer to the fortieth chapter of Ezekiel, where they will find mention made of the 'Porch of the gate,' in vv. 7, 8, 9, 15, &c., &c., and in v. 48 the 'Porch of the house'—that is, of the Temple proper—as I have before described it. At p. 159 of *Dr. Oliver's* 'Signs and Symbols,' he observes that 'Solomon set up two pillars at the entrance of the Porch of the Temple,' which

strengthens my belief that 'Porchway entrance' is the more correct of the two." This so fully agrees with my opinion that I may be excused for quoting at so much length. It is further confirmed by *Dr. Oliver* in his "Landmarks," the first volume of which contains a plan of the Temple, in which the situation of the respective pillars is shewn.

W.M.—Is there any point to which you desire to call our attention connected with the subsequent examination in S. and W.?

Pre.—None of any consequence. Some S.W.'s might be content with the word "whence," instead of "from whence," in the course of examination, but beyond that very slight deviation from correct grammar nothing requires comment. Here, however, I would take the opportunity to say that up to the moment for the presentation for some mark of the W.M.'s favour every Initiate ought to be taken separately. No greater mistake can be made by any W.M. desirous of creating that solemn impression on the mind of a newly admitted Brother which the Science demands, and he has a right to require, than that of introducing more than one Candidate at a time. It may sometimes be considered tedious to rehearse the same ceremony twice, thrice or oftener on the same evening; but as arrangements can always be made in well regulated Lodges, both in regard to time and assistance, it should be beneath the dignity of a W.M. to permit that argument to weigh against his obligations to the Order. One might say much more on this subject and suggest that "work" is too frequently sacrificed to "refreshment,"* and that a careless disregard of order and solemnity ensues; but a word to the wise should be sufficient, and the knowledge that all such Lodges as are desirous of making for themselves honor-

*"Labour is the *rule* in Masonry; refreshment the *exception*."—*Oliver.*

able positions in the craft as "good working Lodges" are now either continuing or returning to the practice of dealing with but one Candidate up to presentation will, doubtless, induce others to emulate their example.

P.M.—I am glad you have referred to this subject. True Freemasons, by which I mean those who have the best interests of the Craft at heart, judge of the value and importance of Lodges by the quality of their work and not of their banquets. Both may be, and very frequently are, excellent. Some Lodges however do not know what work means, but have a special judgment of and regard for good dinners. I hold with you and consider that no more work should be taken in Lodge than ample time can be given to, and the "fourth degree" should never be permitted to interfere with the discharge of duty in those which precede it.

Pre.—All which remarks, as well yours as mine, will be challenged in every direction, and the whispered intimation that "the fish is getting cold" will have its customary influence.

P.M.—Probably so; but where so it may be at once concluded that the genuine "tenets and principles of the Order" are considered of not much account.

Pre.—I agree with you. Before dismissing this reference to refreshment I would take the opportunity to refer to the "final toast," and to deprecate the recent absurb innovation, for which no authority can be found, of accompanying its reception by actions partially of a funereal character, alien in every respect to the true sentiment of the "toast" itself. The wish expressed is for "relief from suffering," and "safe return," and is not at all in the nature of "sorrowful regret unmixed with hope." Sympathy for present circumstances should be accompanied with cheerful anticipations and best wishes for future

prosperity; not with despondent condolences and grievous lamentations. To be consistent, inasmuch as at most of our social gatherings after labour each toast is followed by harmony (more or less appropriate at times, we must admit), so should the "final toast" be succeeded by a doleful dirge, and the Brethren close a joyous reunion with a solemn "Dead March" sounding in their ears! You remember, of course, the relief of Lucknow, when our gallant Highlanders were approaching their beseiged comrades, hoping to "relieve *their* distress" and secure their "safe return;" did they accompany their advance with a "requiem" and "reversed arms?" No! they sent joy and hope to the front by the inspiriting sounds of a jubilant strain well known to the beseiged, and which carried the earnest conviction of assured help into many a despairing breast. So should we go to the assistance of our distressed brethren, cheering them with joyful sounds; and not, as seems to be a growing practice, "cuff" them in solemn silence and with unmeaning gesture. – Where be our teachings in defining Faith, Hope and Charity, if this *innovation* be longer permitted or encouraged? And now, Brethren, we are about to separate for a while. Between this and when next we meet you may probably give some reflection to what I have put before you. If you should think my opinions worth notice, and can give them or any of them adoption, a few very important "knobs" will have been "knocked away by this 'Chip,'" and our "Rough Ashlar" will be approaching nearer to that perfection which can only be attained by strict attention to minor points of ritual, and by thoroughly understanding the meaning of those symbols which veil our beautiful system of morality. For the present, Good-bye! Our meeting is adjourned for a brief space, after which I trust we shall be "happy to meet again."

Chip 6.

PRECEPTOR, P.M., W.M., S. & J. WARDENS, TREASURER, SECRETARY & STUDENT.

Presentation—The BADGE OF A FREEMASON—*The Order of the "Star and Garter"* !!! — *Wilful disregard of published rituals — History of the* MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

Pre.—

I TAKE up our parting words on the last occasion of meeting, Brethren, and again greet your pleasant companionship. We'll to business at once! The presentation of the novitiate has been made, and the S.W. is about to receive directions as the delegate of the Master to invest the newly made——

W.M.—Excuse me! Is *newly* correct?

Pre.—In some Lodges the words "newly made" are altogether omitted; but it is certainly appropriate so to describe the novitiate at this period of the ceremony, for practically his entrance into Freemasonry has been effected, and he is now about to receive investiture as an acknowledgment of that fact. In your case, Brother Student, with what was the S.W. instructed to invest you?

Stu.—"With the distinguishing badge of an E.A.P."

Pre.—Which was altogether wrong. You were to

receive, and in fact did receive, the "badge of a Freemason" irrespective entirely of any degrees in Freemasonry whatsoever. The lambskin, or white leather apron, the first gift of the craft through the agency of the W.M. of a Lodge to an Initiate, is unmistakeably the universal badge or distinguishing vestment of a Member of the Order which all Masons as novitiates wear alike. The adornment by stages of that which is described as "more ancient and honourable" than other distinctions with which it is compared is merely to represent the steps taken in the progress (we say "mark the progress," "mark the further progress") towards a perfect knowledge of the "art and mysteries," but does not take away an iota of the primary importance of the original emblem. To speak of a badge as that of an E.A.P. in contradistinction to those of a F.C. or a M.M. is necessary to particularise the badges of the several degrees, but the equality of Freemasons as Freemasons, and without reference to superior knowledge or advancement, is typified by the universality of the initiatory badge, that which as we say *nothing* is more honourable. In support of this opinion permit me again to quote the same writer whose language I borrowed when speaking of the Porchway entrance. He says at page 87 of the same work,* "All Masons alike wear the apron, which therefore, as between Masons and all other men, is the distinguishing badge of the former. The aprons of the three degrees are distinguished one from the other. The E.A.P. wears a plain white lambskin apron of certain dimensions; the F.C. the same, with two sky-blue rosettes; the M.M. the same, with lining and edging, an additional rosette on the fall or flap, and silver tassels. These several kinds of apron serve to distinguish the brethren of the different degrees one from another, but that which is the badge of

* "Uniformity of Masonic Ritual and Observance," &c.

distinction as between us and other men is the apron which we are told is more honourable than the badge of any other Order in existence. *E.A. Freemason* would destroy the universality of this distinction. It is quite legitimate, however, to speak of an E.A.P.'s apron in contradistinction to a F.C.'s or M.M.'s, and for this reason it is necessary to particularise the respective badges of those degrees." Do you think, Brother P.M., that further or better arguments than these can be adduced in favour of my contention?

P.M.—I think not. At any rate it would be interesting to know what reasons could be given on the other side. Have you heard of any?

Pre.—Not one! But here is another solecism equally worthy of attention. After information has been given as to the badge being more ancient than the "Golden Fleece" or "Roman Eagle," it is described as more honourable than——what, Brother Student?

Stu.—"The Star and Garter, or any other Order."

Pre.—Do you know, or have you ever heard of an Order called the "Star and Garter?"

Stu.—Certainly not. "The Most Noble Order of the Garter," "Knight of the Garter," "Garter King at Arms," &c., are phrases familiar to me, and I know to what they allude.

Pre.—And yet in nearly all the published rituals you will find this abominable error. Fancy our revered Brother Sir Albert Woods, the Grand Director of our Ceremonies, being addressed as "*Star and* Garter King at Arms," and imagine, if you can, what his facial expression would be as he heard this absurd perversion of his most honorable title. Here let me digress for a moment. Since our first interview it has been suggested to me that notwithstanding the fact that the books I refer to have

been multiplied of late years, are still going through frequent editions, and are as easily obtainable as other works, there is a theory in authoritative quarters that there are no such things. To attempt to support that theory is equivalent to maintaining that the sun does not (or should not) shine at mid-day, that water is a solid, that black is white, or that any other directly contradictory proposition has truth for its basis. If men will shut their eyes they cannot see, or close their ears they cannot hear; but wilful blindness—wilful deafness—cannot excuse the continued apathy which, if it does not encourage certainly does not condemn the propagation of error and its inevitably mischievous results. The work which professes to be "perfect, as taught in the Unions Emulation Lodge of Improvement for M.M.'s," contains, as others contain, this error in reference to "the Star and Garter." So important do I think it, that I shall probably have to ask your patience whilst I endeavour to set before you a history which, though perhaps known to you in early days, may not be fully remembered now. The Most Noble Order of the Garter was instituted by Edward III., in the year 1350, the 24th of his reign; 80 years before the institution of the Golden Fleece by Philip II., the second Duke of Burgundy, 1430; 119 years before the foundation of the Order of St. Michael by Louis XI., King of France; and 190 years before King James V. of Scotland restored the Order of the Thistle. The Habit and Ensigns of the Most Noble Order of the Garter were originally Garter, Surcoat, Mantle and Hood, which were assigned by the Founder; to which were added by King Henry VIII. the George, Collar, Cap and Feather. The Royal Garter had the pre-eminence of these by reason that the Noble Order from thence is denominated and, it being the first part of the habit presented to Knights Elect, it was to remind

them that as by their Order they were joined in a firm league of amity and concord, so by their Garter, as by a fast tie of affection, they were obliged to love one another. The motto of the Order is, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*" To the afore-mentioned Ensigns King Charles II. (1660-85) that is *more than three hundred years* after the institution of the MOST NOBLE ORDER, added a silver star, "that the Sovereign and Knights Companions should, at all times and in all places and assemblies, when they were not adorned with their robes, wear upon the left side of their coats, cloaks, or riding cassocks the Cross of the Order encompassed with the Garter, to shew the world what height of honour they arrived to." In *Rappin and Tyndal's* History of England, from which I quote a portion of this information, you will find a most interesting account of the brilliant ceremonial of Investiture in this "Most Noble and Illustrious Order." *Hume and Smollett*, in their History of England, pp. 392-3, say, "In 1344, the Order of King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table was revived under the name of the *Garter*. Philip of France, either inspired by emulation or apprehensive that the bravest Knights in Europe would be connected with it, proclaimed in the same year such another Round Table at Paris, but he could not outvie or lessen the magnificence or glory of the Garter." Here you may note a difference of six years in the dates named by the respective authors as that for the foundation of the Order, and which of course we cannot ourselves reconcile. Another authority, however, gives it as A.D. 1350, by Edward III.—"Some say upon account of good success in a skirmish wherein the King's Garter was used for a token; others say that the King, after his great success, dancing one night with his Queen and other ladies, took up a garter which one of them had dropped, whereat some

of the Lords smiling, the King said that ere long he would make that garter of high reputation, and shortly after erected the Order of the Blue Garter, the Knights of which were also called the Knights of St. George." How in his "Freemason's Manual," describes "The Order of the Garter the highest prized Order of Knighthood in the world," and in reference to the other Orders named, says, "Eumolpus of Thrace was initiated in the mysteries of Ceres at Eleusis (1350 B.C.) and made Hierophantes or High Priest, and the office remained in his family for 1200 years. It was he who instituted the lambskin as a symbol of peace and good-will. Thus it is truly asserted it is more ancient than the Roman Eagle or Golden Fleece." Now in the face of this can it be said that there is an Order of the "Star and Garter?" Some of those who maintain that "it must be correct *because they were taught so!*" when driven to a common sense view of the objection assert that there is a separate Order of the Star, "The Star of India;" but the absurdity of making such a connection with our "ancient ritual" effectually precludes argument. And as in the S.W.'s address the "Golden Fleece" and "Roman Eagle" are spoken of without any prefatory titles, so may it be allowed in like manner to speak of the "Garter," the more consistently that the words "or any other Order" are given immediately subsequent.

P.M.—I am quite in accord with your opinion. Nevertheless, and even after such or similar explanation, I have heard it affirmed, with every evidence of sincere belief and at the same time I must say with a positive manner of declining conviction, that the expression "Star and Garter," or "Star or Garter," as the case may be, has reference to two distinct Orders, an Order of the "Star" and the Order of the "Garter."

Pre.—All I can say is, that it betokens a great want of intelligent consideration to continue so palpable an error. There is no Knighthood of the "Star" in England save that created so recently as the "Star of India," and surely that can have no possible connection with a form of ritual which dates at least as far back as 1813.

P.M.—But it is argued that there is a Persian Order of the Star of great antiquity.

Pre.—I can trace but one Foreign Order bearing such an appellation as existent prior to the last quarter of a century, that is the French Order "de l'Etoile," having for its motto "*Monstrant regibus astra viam*," but which never held any prominent position amongst the other Orders of Knighthood.

W.M.—Does not Shakespeare choose for a scene in one of his Plays, "a room in the *Garter* Inn," and speak of "Mine Host of the *Garter*?"

Pre.—Truly; in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," written about the year 1600, about 250 years after the institution of the Most Noble Order; he does not speak of the *Star* and Garter Inn, nor of Mine Host of the *Star* and Garter, the corruption so much to be condemned not having at that time arisen. In fact the occasion for such corruption could not have arisen, for it was more than fifty years after the play was written that the "Star" was made part of the insignia of the "Order of the Garter." But let other words than mine afford the further protest with which we will, for the present at least, dismiss this point. I quote,*—"It is strange that any man of average intelligence should commit an error in rendering the passage. * * * The Preceptor who says, '*Star and Garter*,' and he who thinks *Star, Garter, &c.*, preferable, betray a most uncommon ignorance of common things. The *Star and Garter* is the

* Q. in *Freemasons' Chronicle*, 25th Nov., 1856.

name of a well-known hostelry at Richmond, and I imagine there are other hostelries of the same name elsewhere. To compare our Freemasonry with a tavern may be very complimentary to the latter, but it is certainly not very flattering to Freemasonry. There is no Order so far as I know—certainly no prominent Order of Knighthood—called 'The Star,' except, indeed, it be the 'Star of India,' which was not in existence when our ritual and lectures were prepared. I believe there is a curious ejaculation among old women, who oddly express their surprise, when anything uncommon happens or is brought under their notice, by exclaiming, '*My stars and garters!*' I take it the origin of this expression will be found in the stars and garters which are worn by a very limited number of illustrious personages, and may be regarded, therefore, in an old womanish kind of way, as emblematical of extraordinary surprises. But one does not relish the idea of associating old women and Masonic Preceptors in the same breath."

Stu.—This should be conclusive, I think, Brother Preceptor, and it will certainly be my practice in the course of my Masonic career to adopt your reading.

Pre.—Until—well, until perhaps you will be called to account when rehearsing the ceremony at some Lodge of Instruction other than your own, and when probably the "courage of your own convictions" will fail you.

Stu.—I understand the possibility of receiving so-called correction, but rely upon it I will not risk being classed amongst those who lack "average intelligence."

Pre.—A worthy resolve; remember it, and be like Claudio,* "He was ever precise at promise keeping."

S. W.—After my mention to the Novitiate that the apron is the badge of innocence and the bond of friendship, and

* "Measure for Measure," Act i., Sc. 2.

that he should ever wear and consider it as such, is it usual to make any lengthened observations.

Pre.—As far as I know in practice there are none; but I find in one of the very many published rituals the following: "You will observe that the apron is made from the skin of a lamb, and as the lamb has been from time immemorial the universally acknowledged emblem of purity and innocence, you will be thereby reminded of the purity of life and actions which should at all times distinguish a Freemason, and which is most essential to your gaining admission to that Grand Lodge above where the blessed ever rest in eternal peace. I trust that you may live many years to wear that badge with pleasure to yourself, usefulness to the Craft, and honour to the Lodge in which you have been initiated; and let me further inform you that if you never disgrace that badge it will never disgrace you."

S.W.—Is that address, think you, part of the original ritual?

Pre.—Very probably it was. It has all the character of most of the other addresses. Perhaps it was considered too great a task for a S.W. to undertake to deliver it, and so, notwithstanding its instructiveness to the novitiate and the exhortation it contains, it was struck out in order to assist short memories. I suppose that to re-introduce it now would be called an "*innovation*," a term very generally applied, Masonically, to any attempt to restore that which originally belonged to the ritual.

S.W.—You have made strong objections to noise or disturbance during the work of the Lodge; how do those affect the present practice of saluting the badge?

Pre.—Salute by all means; but there is no necessity for over vehemence. The respect shewn is not measured by the amount of energy displayed.

P.M.—But, Brother Preceptor, do you not think you are too precise on such small matters?

Pre.—Not too precise, but just precise enough to seek for all the characteristics of gentleness, quietude, and consideration for others which should give the distinguishing tone of good breeding to all we do and say within our sacred portals; no more! We are not an "Antediluvian Order," you know, and we need not imitate.

W.M.—In the additional observations of the W.M. after Investiture there occurs the word "enter," which I notice has sometimes a substitute in "visit." Which do you prefer?

Pre.—Enter! It applies equally to your own Lodge as to any other "wherein there is a Brother with whom you are at variance." Take my advice, Brethren, and never let there be such variance or "feelings of animosity" as could preclude your meeting a Brother Mason at any time. There's no necessity for it and one of our grand principles, "brotherly love," is totally ignored, and the true friendship which it dictates is lost, when Brethren will not admit that it is possible to differ the one from another without anger or animosity. We want more practice of what we profess, and no better recommendation could be given than that in our ancient charges to "patiently listen to the advice of Master and Fellows." Not only should this apply to us as Freemasons, but generally, as we are taught "to set a pious example to the rest of the world who are not Freemasons." With them, equally with those who are of the "Craft," we may differ and disagree, and place our differences and disagreements before others for arrangement, and yet be void of animosity or vindictiveness. Least of all should we ever let the petty squabbles, even amongst ourselves in connection with everyday pursuits, affect our feelings of good fellowship when once we meet

to "clothe and enter." "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath!" If you have a Master on whom you can rely for counsel and advice place yourselves under his "square," and be sure that by his *square* conduct your animosities may be made to subside. Excuse this homily, which your enquiry has called forth, W.M., but the subject is one to which too much importance cannot be given if we desire that beyond the precincts of our Lodges the beneficial effects of our ancient Institution should be understood.

W.M.— We appreciate and thoroughly endorse your remarks, Brother Preceptor, and such advice falls on no unwilling ears.

Pre.—Having now clothed our novitiate, we will take a short adjournment, and at our next interview place him in the N.E. to receive the Master's address and charge in connection with the exercise of Masonic charity.

Chip 7.

PRECEPTOR, P.M., W.M., S. & J. WARDENS, TREASURER, SECRETARY, & STUDENT.

The foundation stone of the intended building—The distinguishing characteristic of a Freemason's heart—Poem on Charity—The banners of Freemasonry—The Offertory—Universal claims—The working tools—"Pure and unpolluted"—The work of the Chisel—"Should time permit"—Temptation in certain Lodges—Preparation for proof of proficiency—The THREE GRAND PRINCIPLES *—Early separation foreshadowed—"High twelve"—Order of business prior to closing the Lodge—The Lodge closed—Valediction.*

P.M.—

AS arranged, Brother Preceptor, we again meet for a renewal of the discourse which has, so far, afforded us much instruction. At our last interview you had concluded your remarks up to the investiture of the novitiate. In the course of those remarks you have spoken of the first of the three grand principles on which our Order is founded and we now approach, in the Master's address, the second—Relief. In this address

there are one or two small matters in respect of which there is disagreement. For instance, I am sometimes corrected if I speak of the "corner of the *intended* building."

Pre.—Though the word "intended" is omitted in the recently published rituals it was originally in the true text. Some one, I suppose, confounded a "memorial" stone, placed sometimes after the completion of a structure, with a foundation stone, which should be one of the very first, if not the first, of the stones *from* and around which, not *on* which as some of us say, the building *intended* to be built will be raised from base to superstructure. Retain the word *intended* for the sake of the symbolism which represents the novitiate as commencing the erection of a life according to Masonic line and rule, and which he will be expected, as the builder, to make perfect and honourable in all its parts. And it should be borne in mind that it is not intended to represent the Lodge as erecting the superstructure, which is the sense conveyed when the Master speaks of "builders," but that the novitiate himself is required to be the architect and builder of his own moral character as a Freemason.

P.M.—You confirm my opinion, but others will insist that the plural should be used as signifying that the Lodge completes the edifice.

Pre.—It does not do so. It may add a course or two of additional work to the foundation it has laid, but the whole remainder of the structure will be what the novitiate himself may choose to make it. He assumes the external appearance of a just and upright Mason, and is exhorted to continue and act as such. It rests with him what he will become, and not with the Lodge.

W.M.—Proceeding with the address I am accustomed to say, "that virtue which may justly be *denominated*." The last word meets with objection.

Pre.—Only from those who have learned Masonry from the books I speak of. In them you will find the synomym "called" substituted. I leave you to determine which of the two words is most in accord with good grammatical style, and to adopt whichever you may select. For once I will borrow a frequently used phrase of Book-masons—"It don't much matter!;" nor does it if there is no desire for cultivated language and evidence of an education beyond the limits of a preparatory school.

W.M.—After the mention of "the distinguishing characteristic of a Freemason's heart, CHARITY," and its comparison with its sister virtue, *Mercy*, there follows a Shakespearian quotation, which, except in a very few instances, is certainly incorrectly rendered. "It blesses him that gives and him that receives," which is the popular mode of expression, is not, you will find if you look up your Shakespeare, the correct quotation. True it is but an error in one word, which I would name but that a reference to and perusal of the entire passage from which the sentence is extracted cannot but prove profitable to all; whilst to some of whom we have acquaintance the palpable evidence that Shakespeare did *not* write "It blesses him that gives and HE who takes," might prove of advantage, by assuring them that he who corrects has sufficient reason for so doing.

Pre.—Certainly! From the nature of your observation I can see that you have "made a remark" somewhere and it has not been relished. Never mind! You may have done good, although prejudice and obstinacy would not admit the fact. Reverting, however, to your first reference to the distinguishing characteristic, in looking through *Dr. Oliver's* "Landmarks"* lately, it gave me pleasure to find him quoting a poem on the subject; he says:—"The

* Historical Landmarks of Freemasonry.—Lecture 5.

following beautiful lines to Charity are from the pen of my Friend and Brother, *John Lee Stevens*:—*

Hail! Balm bestowing Charity!
First of the heaven-born:
Sanctity and sincerity
Thy Temple still adorn:
Communing with mortality
The humble hut thou dost not scorn;
Thou art in bright reality
Friend of the friendless and forlorn.
With joy—induced alacrity
Supplying want—assuaging woe,
To every home of misery,
Thy sister spirits smiling go;
Dispelling all despondency,
Their blessings they bestow—
Like Angels in the ministry,
Of holiness below.

Thinking these lines worth preserving I have ventured to introduce them to you.

W.M.—They should not be lost, and you do well to take the present opportunity for re-introducing them to our notice. There are one or two small matters of difference between some of us in the remaining portion of the address, on which we would ask your opinion. I have been accustomed to say "amongst the thousands who range under its *banners*," and it is only very lately that some Preceptors have required that the word *banner* (in the singular), should be submitted. What say you?

Pre.—The very oldest published rituals, as well as the most modern, agree in the use of the word *banners* (in the

* Lyrics by John Lee Stevens, (an Uncle of the Author,) published in 1837.—*Bradbury and Evans*, London.

plural). But this is not a good argument for correctness, for these "blind guides" will at times keep perfect "Indian file" as they follow one another; although their tendency is to grope about and incline to the right or left of the direct path. A far better argument is, that in the application of the word banners to the context it is meant to represent our *Lodges* as the banners of Freemasonry; branches spread over the four quarters of the globe wherein are not only Members of rank and opulence but some who from circumstances are reduced to poverty and distress. We have about two thousand of such banners, more or less, under which many thousands of men range as Freemasons, and the idea thus created is surely better and more important than any which could attach to a material ensign or standard. There is authority for stating that the Stability Lodge of Instruction, and such others as work in accordance with the teaching of the worthy veteran *Brother Muggeridge*, adopt the singular for the plural; whilst "Emulation working" remains true to the old style of expression, which for considerations above-stated appears the most reasonable. I do not know that it materially affects the point we are now discussing, but I find in MACKEY* "In symbolic Masonry six banners are generally borne in procession, on each of which is inscribed one of the following words: "Faith, Hope, Charity, Wisdom, Strength, Beauty." Some think these must be the banners referred to in the address, but I do not. Even then, the plural would be used. Others say the expression refers to what we term "Banner Lodges;" but then take note how a wide and comprehensive statement becomes reducible to a narrow limit. Lately, commenting on the words in question, "THE FREEMASON" remarked: "It is merely a rhetorical or figurative expression, and has no reference to Lodge Banners. It is an

* *Mackey's* Lexicon of Freemasonry.

expression in very common use." Altogether I think W.M. you should not disturb the old style of verbiage, but continue to speak of banners.

P.M.—When the enquiry of the J.D. is answered by the novitiate with reference to his willingness yet inability to give in the cause of Charity, should the J.D. anticipate the information which will subsequently proceed from the W.M.?

Pre.—I think not. The Assistant Officer should content himself with a mere statement of fact unaccompanied by reasons which it is the province of the W.M. himself to explain. But here I should like to refer to a practice which is followed in at least one Lodge to my knowledge, and which I think should be general. The collection on behalf of Charity should embrace all present, and the novitiate should be the last individual to whom the alms chest should be presented. It is the invariable practice in other degrees of Freemasonry to make the offertory in open Lodge, and there can be no valid reason for its omission in this; "want of time" is no reason for the omission of any good, or the commission of any bad practice in Masonic working. In the case now spoken of the lesson of seeming poverty and distress on which the novitiate is invited to reflect is more forcibly impressed by the real inability to follow the example of those by whom he is surrounded, and thereby "that lasting impression on his mind" which we seek to make is much more assured.

P.M.—Would not the attempt to make this a general practice be treated as an "innovation?"

Pre.—Most probably in many quarters, though it is far more likely that a discontinuance of the collection in open Lodge is a departure from an original custom. You spoke just now, W.M., of "one or two small matters." One we have disposed of; what next?

W.M.—I would have named the use of the words—"Firstly, *as I have already premised*," but even in repeating them to you now I see what tautology that part of the sentence contains, and that the last five words should be omitted. But more important to my mind is the propriety of the words of warning in respect of meeting at a future time "a friend or Brother in distressed circumstances," which phrase has of late been contracted to "a distressed Brother." I use the former expression, but am frequently corrected.

Pre.—Whichever phrase may be used it must be taken in context with the words, "who might *claim* your assistance." When the first is used, it is said that instead of the word *claim* the word *solicit* best applies; that a distressed Brother may claim by right of his connection with the Order, but that in the case of a friend who has not that right solicitation is the utmost that can be allowed. Now this is somewhat departing from the true principles of Freemasonry, by which we are taught "to regard the whole human species as one family, the high and low, rich and poor, created by One Almighty Being, and sent into the world for the mutual aid, support and protection of each other:"—

"For every man man's brother is
In God's eternal sight!"

And although a very natural preference may be given to a Brother Mason's appeal for "aid, support and protection" over that of one who is not so connected, the *claim* for Charitable consideration is equal to those who "sprung from the same stock, are partakers of the same nature, and sharers of the same hope." By our birthright into the world we all have the same privilege of *claiming* the rights of humanity. So our Initiates, newly born into the "mysteries and privileges" of Freemasonry, can *claim*

the rights of Brotherly love and the exercise of Relief towards them. For these reasons I consider that the sentence should be "a Friend or Brother in distressed circumstances, who might *claim* your assistance, you would remember the peculiar moments when you were admitted, &c."

W.M.—There are, I note, many small points of variance in the presentation of the W.T. of this degree. Have you any observation to make to us on these?

Pre.—Not many. They are the W.T. of an *E.A.P.* by reason that though the novitiate is a F.M. he is now but in the first part or degree of the Order and the implements presented to him (the words, "I now present" being used in the sense of introduction merely, and not of giving) are just those required by a new beginner in the Art of Operative Masonry; the rule or 24" guage to measure; the gavel to knock off "superfluous knobs and excrescences" as the original ritual expresses it, and not "superfluities" as the later improvers (?) desire to have it; and the chisel "to further smooth and prepare, &c., for the hands of the more experienced workman," not "*expert* Craftsmen." In their application to morality that part of the *rule* which is devoted to the service of a Friend or Brother in time of need has the reservation "that not being *materially* detrimental to ourselves or connections." The word *materially* is purposed and should not be omitted, for it is meant to express that small amount of self-sacrifice without which our service has no attachable merit, and can bring no comforting reflection to the giver. The Brother who hesitates to do a service to another because he may thereby be just a little poorer in purse, or may sacrifice a little time, and excuses his parsimony or neglect by presuming that the moral application of the uses of the "rule" justifies his apathy or neglect on the score that

even a little assistance would be in some degree detrimental to him, has not yet grasped the full intent and purpose of Freemasonry, and has much to learn and do before he can expect to receive the reward of an inner consciousness that he has redeemed his pledge "to render himself more extensively serviceable to his fellow-creatures."

W.M.—Does the common gavel "denote" or "represent?" Neither word appears to be universally used.

Pre.—Both words have nearly a similar definition. *Denote* is "to signify by a visible sign." *Represent* "to exhibit by resemblance." The former word appears the most applicable to the circumstances of the presentation, the latter is common to nearly all the "books." As there is so little to differ about 'tis hardly worth while to further consider the effect of the variations. More important is the substitution in published rituals of the word "appear" instead of "ascend" in the sentence, "So that our words and actions may ascend to the T. of G. pure and unpolluted." Of course ascend is the proper word; and if you hear the other used you may readily determine "whence *that* word was derived!"

P.M.—Pure and unpolluted! What arguments I have had with Preceptors and others for the retention of that expression! There are those who will insist that such tautology, as they term it, destroys the sentence altogether. I maintain the reverse; "Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"

Pre.—Who indeed? We have no Court of Appeal when such differences and disputes arise. It might have been otherwise long since if——but there's no use in reflecting on "what might have been." As far as my own opinion goes you are right in retaining the words "pure and unpolluted." On the score of euphony alone they are valuable, for they complete a sentence with a smooth

enunciation of sounds particularly agreeable to the ear. Moreover, if together they *are* words expressive of nearly the same meaning, (they are however not altogether and literally so), used relatively to the preceding nouns they are respectively forcible and more important to the text, which might be rendered as "So that our *pure* words and *unpolluted* actions, &c., &c." Do you understand me?

P.M.—I do; and shall be in consequence still more resolved to retain the original text.

Pre.—Now, in reference to the moral application of the chisel, the old ritual runs, after mention of the advantages of education, "by which means alone we are rendered fit members, &c., &c." Lately the word *alone* has been dropped, some say "as surplusage," others that it does not express a fact, for other qualifications are absolutely necessary to the end in view, namely, association with regularly organised society. I am fain to confess that there is great difficulty in forming a decision on this point. Alone certainly means some person or thing unaccompanied by another person or thing. It means unity, oneness, isolation, and unless used in context with other words must express entire separation. But still I take it that education must be the basis upon which all other qualifications are raised, and that inasmuch as the latter could not exist without the former, as a result of the "kind care and instruction of parents and guardians in giving a liberal and virtuous education," it is to mental cultivation *alone* that we must refer when speaking of the means whereby we are rendered fit members of civilised society.

W.M.—In the address which immediately follows the presentation of the W.T. occurs that reference to fees of which you have previously made mention, and, as I understand, you consider that the past tense should be used instead of the future?

Pre.—Certainly. I repeat it is quite as easy to say "You have been called upon" as "you will be called upon," and, for reasons stated,* far more satisfactory to those concerned. There never can be objection to making "assurance doubly sure;" and, moreover, the *right* (not the fairness) to have knowledge of the nature of the authority under which the novitiate has been admitted into the Order is more clearly expressed, and free from all doubt as the fulfilment of his part of the engagement. What is now shewn to him is open for his inspection then "or any future *Lodge evening*," not, as the books have it, "on any future occasion." The one expression is positive as to time and place, the other indefinite. The variance is worthy of notice, because it is certain that except when the Master opens his Lodge there is no compulsion for production of the Warrant to any Officer or Member of the Lodge. You may say it is not needed for inspection except when the Lodge meets; but Masters' Warrants and Secretaries' Minutes have been called for at objectionable seasons, and ridiculous complaints have been lodged for refusals to produce. It's as well that those who brew great storms in very little tea cups should know as much as this. Some of them, perhaps, would be better informed if instead of *shewing* a Book of Constitutions the Lodge empowered the Master, or the Master himself decided, to present, as a gift, a copy of the book in question. Its cost is so trifling that it should be a general rule that each novitiate should take away a copy of each of those books which are "recommended to his serious perusal" in order that he may learn his duty to the Craft generally and his Lodge in particular.

P.M.—I certainly agree with that; the more so because

* See page 59.

suppose we never shall be able to dispense with the words "should time permit," in allusion to the delivery of the *charge* to the novitiate in open Lodge.

Pre.—Would it not be far more straightforward to tell the newly made Brother at once, that his attention is especially desired to the Charge which purposely and properly prefaces the Constitutions of the Order and of which he cannot hereafter plead ignorance, than to suggest what is really not intended. Formerly, there is no doubt, the Charge was always delivered by the W.M. or one of his P.M.'s; but of late that excellent practice, except in rare instances, has been abandoned, and words—which call up derisive smiles from those who hear them—have been substituted. Should time permit! Why, sometimes these words are said at a period of the day when the Brethren contemplate continued association for several hours at least before separation. Let us be honest, and when we know that the hour of refreshment is too near at hand to permit of its fulfilment, leave out altogether the promise to the novitiate that "on his return" his attention shall be directed to that which, he might be much more consistently informed, can be perused by him at his leisure, and probably with far better effect.

W.M.—I have heard that on this termination of the Initiation Ceremony some very objectionable practices are permitted in some Lodges. Are you acquainted with any such?

Pre.—In some of our Provincial Lodges I have witnessed a performance which may be justly so characterised, and which is in violation of every recognised canon of religious propriety. Probably you allude to the "test of memory," which consists in tempting the novitiate to violate his obligation in one particular respect, at the requirement of him who administered such obligation, and in the very

presence of those who heard it taken. It is one of those silly mummeries to which I have previously alluded; and, but for the fact that it is so serious in its import, would merit only contemptuous ridicule. To place before and in the hand of one who has sworn not to do a certain thing the means for doing it,* and to suggest a falsehood as a reason for the request, is diametrically opposed to the principles of our Order, and altogether inconsistent with that universal prayer wherein we supplicate that we may not be "led into temptation." 'Tis true the complete performance of the act is prevented by a ridiculous display of force, and the accompaniment of disorderly sounds; but the fact remains that the whole proceeding is such as should meet with the strongest condemnation from those who can reflect upon the wrong they do to their new companion, and which they, and the Order they profess to revere, share with him. The practice of requiring a salute from the novitiate in the west, at the termination of the Ceremony, is that of all well-governed and orderly Lodges, and one to which no possible objection could be taken.

P.M.—In some Lodges I have observed of late that after such salute, and before the retirement of the novitiate, he has been informed by the W.M. that proof of his proficiency in the first degree will be required from him before he can be passed to the second, and that on his appearance for that purpose no plea of want of instruction will suffice to excuse inability.

Pre.—It is only fair to the newly made Brother that this should be done, for it is by no means unusual for the novitiate to be left, even by his proposer and seconder,

* "How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds
Makes ill deeds done."—*King John*, Act iv., Sc. 2.

who of all others ought to care especially for his instruction, unaware of any such requirement. In consequence you will sometimes see a Brother taken by surprise on being questioned before the assembled Brethren, and utterly aghast at his deficiency. Then comes a prompting of replies amidst confusion and total want of appreciation of their meaning; and then, far too often, the observation from the S.E. part of the Lodge, "Very well answered, W.M."—an observation totally unwarranted under the circumstances. The Book of Constitutions provides that a Brother seeking a higher degree shall "pass an examination" in open Lodge, which scarcely means that he shall present himself absolutely, in frequent cases, without the remotest knowledge of any portion of the required examination. If the Rulers of Lodges were true to the letter and spirit of our Constitutions, many candidates would be *put back* for examination at a subsequent meeting. MACKEY says on this subject, "One of the requisite qualifications for advancement to a higher degree is suitable proficiency in the preceding. Unfortunately this qualification is not always sufficiently insisted on. Formerly there was a regulation requiring that the candidate who desired to be passed or raised should be examined in open Lodge, *not in the ante-chamber by a P.M. or Assistant Officer*, (these italics are mine), on his proficiency in the preceding degree. This salutary regulation is even now adhered to by some Lodges who look rather to the quality than to the quantity of their Members, and who think that a Lodge had better consist of a few skilful than many ignorant Members."*

P.M.—I entirely coincide with his and your remarks, and in continuance of my observation may add that in the Lodges I refer to the questions to which replies are

* *Mackey's* Lexicon of Freemasonry.

expected are put from the E. to the principal Officer in the W. in the presence of the novitiate, who thus becomes acquainted with the nature and extent of the examination he has to undergo.

Pre.—And the result has doubtless been a confident and manly bearing, a ready and intelligent response to the W.M. on the part of the candidate for advancement, and a general feeling of satisfaction amongst all present that the credit of the Lodge was thus sustained by one of its newest Members. In respect of those questions I would remark that they are eleven in number, and that the last of the eleven should have the names of the Three Grand Principles as its answer, as the general effect of the examination is greatly enhanced by its termination with those three important words; of the first of which it is said in our ancient charges that the principle is "the foundation and copestone, the cement and glory of our ancient Fraternity;" and of the three conjointly MACKEY observes, "Of the philanthropic tendency of Masonry abundant evidence is afforded in every country in which a Lodge exists. Its charities are extended to the poor and destitute, to the widow and orphan, with a liberal hand; and its numerous institutions for improving the physical and moral condition of the human race prove that 'Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth,' are not the mere idle and unmeaning language of a boastful motto, but the true and guiding principles of our Association."*

W.M.—There is a great variation in the manner of answering the sixth question of this examination, is there not?

Pre.—Yes. It has been the subject of much discussion as well in Lodges of Instruction, as in our † Masonic

* *Mackey's* Lexicon.

† See "Freemasons' Chronicle," November 11th, 1876.

Journals. It would, however, be too great an addition to what we have together done, in our respective positions of speaker and hearers, to enter fully into all the reasons why the most perfect rendering is acknowledged to be: "The Sun being the centre of the solar system, the earth constantly revolving round it on its own axis, and F.M. being universally spread over the surface of the earth, it necessarily follows that the Sun must be always at its meridian with respect to Freemasonry." I must refer you to the aforesaid Journals, and to the work in which the discussion was re-printed* for any further information you may desire. In the ninth question of the examination, which enquires of the Candidate for the second degree how he knows himself to be what he represents he is, the customary answer appears to be defective in the use of the word "approbation," instead of "probation." *Approbation* of what or of whom? What it is intended to convey is the fact of repeated submission to the act of proving, in the manner prescribed by which proof is given of bonâ fides. *Probation* being "a proceeding designed to ascertain the truth," the expression should certainly be "repeated trials and probations."

P.M.—You referred just now to our work together at our several interviews. Is it about to cease?

Pre.—For a time, yes. I must see how far what has been done has been productive of profit to us respectively; and our Brother Publisher reminds me that the allotted time for the termination of the first series of these interviews is close at hand. Whether or not they will be resumed for the consideration of numerous other important points in the progessive science will greatly depend upon yourselves and your appreciation of my endeavours. Kindly bear in mind that "it is the hope of reward that

* Uniformity of Masonic Ritual and Ceremonial.

sweetens labour," and give me what encouragement you can towards further efforts in a similar direction.

P.M.—It shall not be wanting, Brother Preceptor, you may depend. The time we have passed together cannot fail to have been instructive to us, and to bear, we trust, good fruit in many ways. But will you not "close our Lodge" before we separate?

Pre.—Certainly! I feel as much disposed to defer the inevitable parting as you all appear to be. I would fain "call off and on;" but there is not in either of these ceremonies much difference in working. The principal point on which I would remark is that "High twelve" is more correct and appropriate than "High time." The former is full of meaning. MACKEY says: "High twelve, or noon, was the hour at the Temple when our ancient Brethren were regularly called from labour to refreshment. The tradition is that they worked twelve hours a day and six days in the week." Those of our Brethren who have taken the Cryptic degrees, and especially that of "Royal Master," can more fully understand the importance of the use of the correct expression. "High *Time*" may mean anything, and no Masonic symbolism whatever attaches to those words.

W.M.—Is it the fact that it is only in the first degree the Lodge can be called off?

Pre.—Certainly! It is sometimes done for the purpose of banquetting in open Lodge as I have already explained;* sometimes to afford the Brethren an interval of relief during a protracted meeting; and at other times for the performance of a duty or business outside the ordinary ceremonial proceedings of the Lodge, which must of necessity be "called on" at "past high twelve," prior to closing, as business cannot be resumed without the latter ceremony. During the period of the "call off" the Lodge

* See page 28.

is in charge of the J.W., in token of which his column is placed in a perpendicular position. It is so placed and continued during that period only, and at no other time either before Lodge is opened, whilst at work, or after the Lodge is closed. MACKEY, whom you will perhaps say I have rather extensively quoted, thus refers to the authority of the J.W. at the time named:—"The plumb is the Jewel of the J.W., and it seems symbolically to instruct us, as the authority of this Officer is exercised only in time of refreshment, when the Brethren are no longer within the sacred precints of the Lodge-room, that then more particularly, when the eyes of a censorious world are upon him, should the Mason walk uprightly and eschew evil."

Sec.—As affecting my duties in the Lodge, pray tell me is there any particular order to be observed in respect of the final business of the Lodge before it is closed?

Pre.—As all things should be begun in order so should they conclude, and especially amongst a body of men who have supplicated for that quality in conjunction with peace and harmony. In brief, I submit the following arrangement for your consideration Brother Secretary, and would assure you that your business arrangements would be facilitated by its adoption. Of course you know that whatever is named in the summons as part of the Lodge work must be disposed of before the first enquiry by the W.M. for the good of the Order in general and his Lodge in particular. Then on "first rising," let only propositions for Initiations and Joinings, and any payments to yourself or Treasurer occupy the interval between "first" and "second." The "second" should call you up for the reading of communications, the reception of applications, and notices of motion if there be any. This will leave the "third rising" clear for the greetings of visitors, who

alone are expected to offer "hearty good wishes" on behalf of their respective Lodges.*

Sec.—Thanks for your suggestions; they shall at least be tried.

Pre.—And from experience in a like capacity I am able to assure you that such orderly arrangement will greatly facilitate your work. And now to close our Lodge, a duty which is as imperative, and the ceremony connected with which is as solemn, as that of the opening. The Lodge cannot be adjourned; the Meeting may, and hence the confirmation by the J.W. of the S.W.'s final act, and the subsequent adjournment to a specified date, subject only to emergent affairs requiring the earlier opening of the Lodge. The Master can alone, by the agency of his Principal Warden, dismiss the Brethren, and that dismissal must take place after a settled usage. In this ceremony there is but little if any variation amongst the Lodges. Let me, however, once more impress on you that "*constant* place" is correct as to Wardens; that it is necessary to "prove" by sound, to which there can be now no objection since the erstwhile stranger is now "one of us;" that the Lodge is "close tyled;" and that the expression *just due* should be used by the S.W. for reasons already given, and for one other which I remind myself of. In the examination of one of the degrees you know enquiry is made why our Ancient Brethren received their wages "without scruple," and in reply it is stated that they well knew they were "*justly* entitled to them." I think you will agree with me that this adds force to my former

* The Master and Wardens of a Lodge are enjoined to visit other Lodges as often as they conveniently can, in order that the same usages and customs may be observed throughout the Craft, and a good understanding cultivated amongst Freemasons.—"*Constitutions*," *New Edition*, *Clause* 149.

reasoning for the retention of the expression at all times of *just due*. I think I have said all I need to say at present in connection with variations in the First Degree. There are very many points of divergence in Ritual and Ceremonial in the succeeding Degrees and the Lectures, some of great and some of minor importance, on which I have as yet not touched, for the time at our disposal, and still more the necessity for the strictest caution so to express myself as not to be "understanded of the many," have necesstated but a rapid survey of the whole subject. I believe that in reflecting on what has passed between us you may be assured that nothing is mentioned which has not already, in some form or other, been referred to by Masonic authors whose names I have given, and to whom I refer you in the event of your desiring to ascertain their opinions *in extenso*. Our Ritual is a subject of ever increasing interest to the earnest Student, and if I find that you desire it, we will at some no distant date resume our interviews; but the consideration for so doing must be a fair appreciation of what has been already done. And now, my dear Brethren, we are about to part. Our interviews have been lengthened beyond my original intent, but I shall be quite prepared to receive from you individually any enquiries you may be disposed to make, and to satisfy you, as far as my limited powers extend, in respect of any disputed point. We may thereby continue to be of mutual service to each other and maintain our connection until the time arrives, as I hope it may, when we shall renew our interviews, and together roam "fresh woods and pastures new." It will depend upon yourselves how soon we may renew our pleasant intercourse. If you seek me I shall be found, and, encouraged by appreciation of what has been done, we shall, I trust, with the assistance of our Brother

Publisher, yet further advance the cause of purity of Masonic ritual and ceremonial, and knock off "MORE CHIPS" from the remaining faces of the Rough Ashlar upon which we have so far employed the Gavel of Common Sense; meanwhile—

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Secretary: F. R. W. HEDGES, 5, Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, W.C.,
By whom Subscriptions will be thankfully received.

THE 97TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL

Wednesday, May 13th, 1885,

Under the Presidency of

SIR WALTER W. BURRELL, Bart., M.P.,

R.W. Provincial Grand Master of Sussex.

The names of Brethren willing to serve as Stewards are very earnestly solicited.

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QUARTERLY MEETINGS of the Governors and Subscribers are held on Monday immediately following the second Saturday in January, April, July, and October, at 12 o'clock at noon, at Freemasons' Hall.

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